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The Guardian

Newspaper of the year

NHS: alarm over exodus of medical students

Third of young medics plan to quit NHS within two years of graduating

Andrew Gregory
Health editor

One in three medical students plan to quit the NHS within two years of graduating, either to practise abroad or abandon medicine altogether, the largest survey of its kind shows.

Poor pay, work-life balance and working conditions of doctors in the UK were the main factors cited by those intending to emigrate to continue their medical career.

The same reasons were also given by those planning to quit medicine altogether, with nearly 82% of them also listing burnout as an important or very important reason.

The findings from the study of 10,486 students at the UK’s 44 medical schools, published in the journal BMJ Open, triggered calls for action to prevent an exodus of medical students from the NHS.

They come weeks after junior doctors and consultants announced the first joint strike in the history of the health service, which is expected to bring widespread disruption in September and October.

The Guardian revealed in July that the NHS was losing senior doctors to countries including Ireland, Australia and the United Arab Emirates because they could double their salary and enjoy better working conditions.

The new research, revealing the intentions of medical students after university graduation or on completing the two-year NHS foundation training programme, will prompt further alarm among medical leaders trying to tackle the growing workforce crisis.

About 60% of those surveyed, whose average age was 22, were either not satisfied or not at all satisfied with the prospect of working in the NHS.

All students were asked their career intentions after graduation, with most (84%) planning to complete both years of the UK’s foundation training. But about a third revealed they planned to leave the NHS within two

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▲ *A woman in Douzrou, one of many mountain villages devastated by Friday’s earthquake* PHOTOGRAPH: CARL COURT/GETTY

MPs’ fury over silence after alleged spy’s arrest

Dan Sabbagh
Ben Quinn
Pippa Crerar

MPs vented their fury yesterday over a six-month silence that followed an aide operating at the heart of parliament being arrested on suspicion of spying for China and accused of passing information to Beijing in breach of the Official Secrets Act.

They voiced concern that the six-month gap meant they could not take their own security precautions, amid wider fears individual pro-democracy activists could be put at risk by any security lapse.

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Quake toll nears 2,700 as hopes of rescue fade

Ruth Michaelson
Peter Beaumont *Tafeghaghte*
Dounia Z Mseffer *Casablanca*

The death toll in the Moroccan earthquake has passed 2,600 people as a limited number of foreign aid and rescue teams joined an intensifying race against time to find survivors high in the Atlas mountains, where many villages remain inaccessible.

Moroccan authorities said they had “responded favourably” to offers of help from visiting search and rescue teams from Spain, Qatar, Britain and the United Arab Emirates, but were yet to accept offers of aid from other countries despite the urgent nature of the disaster, including from France and from Turkey, which experienced a deadly quake in February.

The state news agency said “Moroccan authorities have carried out a precise assessment of needs on the ground, given the fact that non-coordination in

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News



◀ *Jenni Hermoso, whose phone has been hacked, according to the former Spanish captain Verónica Boquete*
PHOTOGRAPH: HECTOR VIVAS/GETTY IMAGES

Rubiales row felt like ‘going to war’, says former Spain captain

Ashifa Kassam
Kate Connolly

A former captain of the Spain women's national football team has described the weeks-long standoff over the fate of Luis Rubiales as a “war” that had pitted more than a 100 of the country's top female players against certain members of the Spanish football establishment.

In an interview published yesterday, Verónica Boquete even went so far as to claim that Jenni Hermoso's phone had been hacked, suggesting it may have been an attempt to discredit Hermoso in the wake of the unsolicited kiss by Rubiales.

Boquete did not offer further details of the alleged phone hacking or who might have done it, nor did she explain where the information had come from. “We knew there were no rules. Jenni's phone was hacked,” she told the German news magazine Der Spiegel. “The perpetrators had access to personal videos and photos. Now only the things that will help them attack the victim will be leaked.”

The alleged hack came up after Boquete was asked about a video seemingly leaked this month in which Spanish players are seen on the team bus soon after their World Cup win. In the video, the mood appears to be jovial and some appear to be laughing about the kiss.

Boquete pointed to the wider context to claim that the video was being used strategically, saying: “There were also other moments on the bus in which the players said: ‘Enough, this is a serious matter that cannot be tolerated.’”

She said she had been in contact with Hermoso and other players who were also in contact with her. “These are difficult days for her and her family,” she said. “But I think the support and team spirit from the other players gives her strength.”

The interview was published hours after Rubiales announced his resignation. The decision followed three weeks of mounting outrage after he grabbed Hermoso by the head, pulled her towards him and planted a kiss on her lips after Spain's World Cup final victory.

Yesterday, Spain's top criminal court said it had opened an investigation into Rubiales and begun soliciting media outlets for footage of the kiss and the players' celebrations. A prosecutor with the court said on Friday that a complaint had been filed amid concerns that there were grounds to charge the formal football chief with sexual assault as well as coercion.



▲ *Luis Rubiales, who resigned as Spain's football chief on Sunday*

In a statement published late last month, Hermoso said the incident had left her feeling “vulnerable and a victim of aggression”. She characterised the kiss as an “impulsive act, sexist, out of place and without any type of consent from my part”.

In announcing his resignation on Sunday, Rubiales said he would continue to defend himself: “I have faith in the truth and I will do everything in my power so that it prevails.”

Boquete won 62 caps for Spain but was not selected for the national team after a 2015 player revolt against the federation.

She described to Der Speigel how dozens of players had banded together after Rubiales appeared to be trying to shift the blame on to Hermoso during a speech in which he railed against “false feminism” and vowed to stay on in his role. It felt as if “we were going to war”, she said. “Rubiales has crossed all boundaries, so let's not hold back either.”

Boquete started a WhatsApp group – named Off to War – made up of the 81 players who had signed a statement saying they would not play for the national team until changes in leadership were made. She said the group now had more than 100 players.

Boquete said the sentiment now was that the female footballers had “won a battle but are losing the war”.

She pointed to the change in coaches for the women's team as an example. She welcomed the sacking of the former coach Jorge Vilda, claiming he was a “control freak” who allegedly forced them to leave the doors to their rooms unlocked at night so that he could wish them goodnight and allegedly forced captains to sit at different tables while eating, over concerns that they would conspire against him.

But by replacing him with his assistant coach Montse Tomé, she felt the federation had not made enough of a clean break to convince the players to end their strike. “We demand deeper change,” she said. “She [Tomé] allowed a lot of things to happen and only distanced herself from Rubiales later on.”

Rubiales, Vilda and Tomé did not reply to a request for comment.

One in three student medics plan to quit NHS within two years

Continued *from page 1*

years of graduating, either to practise abroad or pursue other careers.

Among the 2,543 medical students citing a preference for their destination country, Australia was the most mentioned (43%), followed by New Zealand (18%), the US and Canada (both 10%). Of those set to emigrate, half said they were planning a return to UK medicine after a few years, while nearly 8% intended to return after completion of their medical training abroad. But 43% said they had no intention of returning.

Fewer than 3% of those surveyed planned to leave medicine altogether, but those who did wanted to pursue careers in consulting, technology, finance or law.

Writing in the journal BMJ Open, the authors, including students at the University of Cambridge and Imperial College London, said the NHS was facing a “critical workforce shortage”.

It was unsurprising students planned to leave for countries such as Australia “given the higher salaries, reports of improved work-life balance and the fact that these countries' primary language is English”, they said. The authors concluded: “The findings of this study emphasise the urgency of addressing the factors that are driving the exodus of doctors from the NHS and suggest that increased recruitment of medical students may not provide an adequate solution to staffing challenges.

“Undoubtedly, the continued loss of skilled professionals from the NHS represents a significant concern, so it is critical to consider means of reversing this trend.”

82%
Proportion of students who listed burnout as a key reason why they plan to quit medicine altogether

Announcing the NHS long-term workforce plan in June, Rishi Sunak said figures suggested about 95% of medics still worked for the NHS after foundation training. Asked whether students should be tied to an NHS contract, he said “the scale of what is happening is not at the scale of what people commonly assume” and that he had not thought it was the right approach to take.

The Department of Health said: “There are record numbers of staff working in the NHS, with over 6,000 more doctors compared to this time last year. And the first ever NHS long-term workforce plan, backed by over £2.4bn, will double the number of medical school places to recruit and retain hundreds of thousands more staff over the next 15 years.”

Tipping point: for first time tourists outnumber local residents in Venice



◀ Gondolas pass through a small canal near St Mark's Square. The influx of visitors has left many Venetians feeling like foreigners in their own city



▲ Dozens of tourists crowd on to the Rialto Bridge to take photographs of the Grand Canal, in Venice
PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREA MEROLA/GETTY IMAGES

Angela Giuffrida
Rome

Precariously located in the waters of the Venetian lagoon, the "floating city" of Venice has long been at risk of becoming a disappearing one.

But even before the climate crisis takes any more of a toll on the landmass of the historic city island, another very basic necessity is vanishing fast: places for residents to live.

The problem is not one born of rising sea water but rather the waves of tourists that wash over Venice each year. The desire to cash in on the travel economy means the number of beds available to tourists on Venice's main island has surpassed the number of year-round residents for the first time. There are now 49,693 tourist beds, across hotels and rented holiday homes, compared with 49,304 inhabitants.

Once the heart of a powerful maritime republic, Venice's main island has lost more than 120,000 residents since the early 1950s, driven away by myriad issues but mainly a focus on mass tourism that has caused the city's population to be dwarfed by the thousands of visitors who crowd its squares, bridges and narrow walkways each day.

49,693
The number of tourist beds in Venice, in hotel accommodation and rented holiday homes

49,304
The number of residents living on Venice's main island, a drop of more than 120,000 since the 1950s

Venessia.com, a group that has campaigned to preserve Venice's heritage, has been keeping track of the population level in the historic centre, displaying the dwindling figure on an electronic ticker in the window of Morelli chemists since 2008.

The number of residents dipped below 50,000 for the first time last summer. "We feel like foreigners in our own home, because when you walk along the streets we are in the minority," said Matteo Secchi, who leads Venessia.com.

"Every now and then you see a fellow Venetian and you salute them from afar, but other than that you are surrounded by tourists."

Meanwhile, Ocio, a residents' group focused on housing issues in Venice, placed an electronic ticker in the window of Marco Polo bookshop in April to display the growing number of beds available to tourists.

"We never imagined that within a few months the number on the ticker would exceed that of the residents' ticker," the association said on its website.

A recommendation by Unesco, the United Nations' cultural agency, to add Venice to the heritage danger list will be put to its world heritage committee, which is meeting in the Saudi Arabian capital, Riyadh.

The agency said in July that Venice faced "irreversible" damage due to problems ranging from the effects of climate breakdown to mass tourism, while noting a "lack of significant progress" by Italy in addressing the issues.

The Ocio group said: "Ahead of the [Unesco] meeting we wanted to highlight how the constant opening of hotels and the lack of regulation of short-term rentals have progressively transformed the historic city into a tourist spot."

Visitors returned in full force this summer after severe flooding in 2019 and then the pandemic disrupted tourism. An average 40,000 day-trippers poured into the city on peak days, prompting Venice's local authority to announce it would finally enforce a long-mooted entrance ticket from next year.

The €5 fee will only apply to those who visit the city for a day. The aim is to discourage day-trippers during peak periods as a way to preserve the city's "fragility" and "uniqueness".

Simone Venturini, councillor for tourism, said the measure would position Venice as a "trailblazer on the global level" and was not about making a profit but finding "a new balance between the rights of those who live, study or work in Venice, and those who visit the city".

However, Secchi fears the initiative will turn Venice into "a theme park" as opposed to a place where people want to live and work. "Venice needs to regulate the tourist flow, not charge an entrance fee," he added.

The meeting of Unesco's world heritage committee runs until 23 September, although it is unclear when a decision about Venice will be announced. It is the second time within the space of a few years that Venice, which was inscribed on the world heritage site list in 1987, has been threatened with the danger list.

"We don't need Unesco to tell us we're at risk," said Secchi. "We've known for decades. But maybe being put on the danger list will sprinkle a bit of pepper on to the authorities to do more."

Turmeric is as good as medicine for treating indigestion, study suggests

Andrew Gregory
Health editor

Turmeric may be tasty in a recipe or an infusion, but it may also be as good for treating indigestion as medicine, a study has suggested.

A natural compound in the spice may be as effective as omeprazole, a drug used to reduce excess stomach acid and treat indigestion, according to the first study of its kind.

Turmeric contains a naturally active compound called curcumin, thought to have anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties. It has long been used as a medicinal remedy, including for the treatment of indigestion, in south-east Asia. Until now it has been not clear how well it compares with conventional drugs, largely because there have been no comparative studies.

In a double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial, researchers studied 206 patients aged 18 to 70 with recurrent upset stomach. They were recruited from hospitals in Thailand between 2019 and 2021, and randomly assigned to one of three treatment groups for 28 days.

They were treated with either turmeric (two large 250mg capsules of curcumin 4 times a day) and one small dummy capsule; omeprazole (one small 20mg capsule daily and two large dummy capsules 4 times a day); or turmeric plus omeprazole.

Omeprazole is a proton pump inhibitor (PPI). Long-term use of PPIs has been linked to increased fracture risk, micronutrient deficiencies, and a heightened risk of infections.

Patients in all three groups had similar clinical characteristics and indigestion scores, as assessed by the severity of dyspepsia assessment score or Soda, at the start of the trial. Patients were reassessed after 28 days and then again after 56.

Researchers, whose findings were published in the journal BMJ Evidence-Based Medicine, found oral curcumin was safe and well tolerated, and patients in all three groups experienced a similar improvement.

They acknowledged the small size of the study, as well as several other limitations, including the short intervention period and lack of long-term monitoring data. Further larger, long-term studies were needed, they said.



◀ *A march in London against anti-protest laws. Activists said facial recognition could be used to identify demonstrators*
PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES MANNING/PA

‘Dystopia’ warning as Met chief hails facial recognition progress

Matthew Weaver

Britain’s most senior police officer has predicted facial recognition technology will transform criminal investigations as much as DNA testing has done, a prospect described as dystopian by human rights campaigners.

Sir Mark Rowley, the Metropolitan police commissioner, said: “We’ve also shown recently that live facial recognition is massively effective at picking out wanted offenders from crowds of people.”

Speaking at an event to mark his first year in the post, Rowley added: “The next step is more exciting: retroactively using facial recognition to identify unknown suspects from CCTV images is showing immense potential.

“The results that we’re getting are beyond what I expected and I think are going to transform investigative work, potentially, in the way that DNA transformed investigative work 30 years ago.”

The campaign group Liberty said Rowley’s comments would have a chilling effect on the right to protest.

Katy Watts, one of its lawyers, said: “We all have the right to go about our lives freely, without being scanned and monitored, but expanding the use of facial recognition will invade our privacy and violate our rights.”

Watts added: “This dystopian technology can be used to subject people existing in public to intrusive surveillance.

“Retrospective facial recognition can be used to scan people caught on CCTV or on mobile phone footage at protests – meaning anyone standing up for what they believe in could have their sensitive personal data recorded and monitored.”

Silkie Carlo, the director of Big Brother Watch, said that without the strongest safeguards, facial recognition technology threatened to turn the UK into a surveillance state.

“It can absolutely be as intrusive as DNA, which is why it’s so concerning that the Met is using it to scan hundreds of thousands of innocent Londoners, often with dangerously inaccurate results,” she said.

She added: “We cannot have police making up the rules on such a powerful surveillance technology as they go along, nor monitoring the public with live facial recognition cameras which are at the most invasive, extreme end of the spectrum.”

Referring to a court of appeal ruling that the use of facial recognition technology breached privacy rights and broke equalities law, Watts added: “A court has already ruled once that the use of facial recognition technology breached our fundamental rights. Instead of allowing the police to expand the ways they use it, the government should be banning its use.”

In a speech to the right-leaning Policy Exchange thinktank, Rowley suggested that the use of new technology, such as facial recognition, was necessary to make up for cuts in police funding and would help tackle the greater complexity of crimes.

“We spend less per capita on policing than many other western countries,” the Met chief said. “I have 28% less to spend on policing London in real terms per capita than we had a decade ago.

“We have also stretched ourselves from policing that 30 years ago focused simply on the public space to one that increasingly, and rightly, invests in tackling those predatory crimes that often take place in private, like rape and child abuse and domestic abuse.

“And of course we’re struggling to cover the ground presented by the online threats of fraud.”

He added: “Success in such a landscape with constrained resources requires real precision. That’s the reason we’re using data – for that precision to have the maximum effect with a minimum resource.”



▲ *An artist’s sketch of Daniel Khalife appearing in court yesterday*

Terror suspect appears in court on charges of prison escape

Kevin Rawlinson

Daniel Khalife, the terror suspect who became the subject of an intensive four-day manhunt, appeared in court yesterday charged with escaping from Wandsworth prison.

The former British soldier is accused of fashioning a strap – possibly from bedsheets – to attach himself to the underside of a van leaving the prison and going on the run.

Khalife was arrested on a canal towpath in west London at 10.41am on Saturday after being spotted riding a bicycle. It is alleged he absconded from the prison on 6 September.

Khalife, 21, appeared in court in a grey tracksuit and flanked by two police officers and a dock officer. Three police officers also sat in the well of the court. He spoke only to confirm his name and date of birth.

Khalife was charged earlier this year with devising a fake bomb, eliciting personnel information from a Ministry of Defence information system about members of the armed forces “which is of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism”, and breaching the Official Secrets Act by collecting or sharing documents or information that could be “directly or indirectly useful to an enemy”.

The court heard allegations that Khalife had been to Richmond Park and Chiswick while police searched for him.

Khalife was due to face trial on the terrorism charges in November. He was remanded in custody on the further charge of escaping prison and is due to appear at the Old Bailey on 29 September.

Voter ID a ‘poisoned cure’ that led to discrimination, say MPs

Kiran Stacey
Peter Walker

Rules governing voter identification led to racial and disability discrimination at this year’s local elections in England, according to a report co-written by one of the former ministers responsible for introducing them.

MPs and peers on the all-party parliamentary group on democracy and the constitution published a report yesterday saying that the rules caused more harm than they prevented when they came into force in May, and calling for changes including the acceptance of a greater range of ID documents.

The report was co-authored by Sir Robert Buckland, who was justice minister in 2021 when the bill to introduce the rules was first launched in parliament, and who subsequently helped vote them through.

The committee is chaired by the Scottish National party MP John Nicolson and also includes Labour MPs and peers.

The report says: “The current voter ID system is, as it stands, a ‘poisoned cure’ in that it disenfranchises more electors than it protects.”

The authors found: “Polling clerks are more likely to fail to compare a photo ID to the person presenting that document if the person is of a different ethnicity.”

They also highlighted the case of Andrea Barrett, who is immunocompromised and was blocked from entering a polling booth after refusing to remove her mask for an ID check. The report says: “Their decision in that instance was … clearly discriminatory (and potentially unlawful) because they denied Andrea Barrett the right to cast a ballot purely on the basis of circumstances which arose as a direct result of a disability.”

When Boris Johnson introduced the proposals to parliament in 2021, Downing Street said they were designed to prevent potential election fraud, despite only three people having been convicted for identity fraud at polling booths in the previous seven years.

Ministers limited the types of identification that could be accepted, and included older people’s travel passes, but not those of younger voters.

An interim study published by the Electoral Commission this year found at least 14,000 people had been denied a vote because they lacked the correct form of ID.

Anecdotal evidence in the all-party group report suggested people may have been unfairly treated because of their race. It calls for those who fail ID checks to be allowed to sign a legally binding declaration instead.

Dangerous dogs
Victim's mother criticises ministers
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Cloning pioneer
Creator of Dolly the sheep dies at 79
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All Wilko stores to close within weeks as rescue deal collapses

Mark Sweney

All of Wilko's 408 stores are to close with the loss of more than 12,000 jobs after talks with potential buyers failed to deliver a rescue deal for the stricken retailer.

The GMB union said yesterday that the administrators PricewaterhouseCoopers had informed staff that all stores were to close by early October. Wilko's warehouses in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, and Newport, Wales, are to close on Friday.

"No worker caused the downfall of Wilko. But they will be the ones who will suffer. Wilko should have thrived in a bargain retail sector that is otherwise strong," said Nadine Houghton, a GMB national officer.

Last week PwC announced the closure of 52 Wilko stores and the loss of more than 1,300 staff, including support centre workers and warehouse staff but continued talks with prospective buyers.

Yesterday a rescue deal proposed by the owner of HMV that would have saved about half the stores and thousands of jobs collapsed. Doug Putman, who engineered a turnaround of HMV in the UK and owns Toys R Us in Canada, had been negotiating to save as many as 200 of Wilko's stores, throwing a lifeline to its staff.

A £13m deal struck by the discount retailer B&M last week to save 51 properties did not include saving staff jobs. Administrators remain in talks with Poundland over about 100 stores. However, a deal would not include the transfer of staff. The discount retailer The Range is seeking a deal for the Wilko brand.

Putman's plan, which offered the best chance of saving stores and jobs, originally involved trying to keep 300 stores and their staff running. PwC said the transaction had fallen through because of "the inability to reduce central infrastructure costs quickly enough to make a deal commercially viable".

"It is with great disappointment that we can no longer continue in the purchase process for Wilko, having worked with administrators and suppliers over several weeks to seek a viable way to rescue it as a going concern," Putman said.

The deal ran into trouble earlier this month when suppliers including Unilever and Procter & Gamble said they wanted debts repaid to continue to guarantee supplying stores.

There were also concerns that some suppliers, which cancelled shipments to Wilko stores when the chain went into administration last month, would not be able to ship products for another six weeks.

12,000
Number of staff who will lose their jobs with the closure of Wilko's 408 stores by early October

"We had financing in place and received the full support of PwC, Wilko management and staff representatives, which we are deeply thankful for considering what a challenging time it has been for them," Putman said.

"However, commitment to overhauling the trading framework of the business with partners and the costs of running Wilko's legacy operations infrastructure combined has meant that a stable foundation could not be secured to ensure long-term success for the business and its people in the way that we would have wanted."

The retailer, which was founded in 1930 when JK Wilkinson opened his first store in Leicester, took over stores left empty when Woolworths collapsed in 2008.

"It looks like the famous red and white shopfronts will be dismantled and Wilko will join Woolworths in the high street history books," said Susannah Streeter, the head of money and markets at Hargreaves Lansdown. "The ditched deal could not come at a worse time for the high street, with its fortunes looking increasingly crushed amid the cost of living crisis and competition from online."



PHOTOGRAPH: TRISTRAM KENTON/THE GUARDIAN

Move closer Harris Beattie and Aerys Merrill performing in Intimate Pages, a work by the New York City Ballet principal dancer Tiler Peck. It is part of the Generations triple bill - along with Joie de Vivre by Benjamin Ella and Adagio Hammerklavier by Hans van Manen - at the Stanley & Audrey Burton theatre, Leeds, until Saturday. It will then transfer to the Linbury theatre, London.

High pace of UK inflation will prevent autumn tax cuts - Hunt

Larry Elliott
Economics editor

Jeremy Hunt has warned that the high pace of inflation in Britain will prevent pre-election tax cuts this autumn amid signals from the Bank of England that another rate rise to ease cost of living pressures is coming next week.

Speaking in India, the chancellor said he would be wary of putting money in the pockets of consumers in his November package because of the danger it would overstimulate the economy and make it more difficult for the Bank to bring down inflation.

"When you're trying to bring down inflation, you have to be really careful not to pump extra money into the economy, as much as you would like to - not to pump extra money into people's pockets - because that can push up prices and keep inflation higher for longer," Hunt said in an interview with Bloomberg TV.

He said money would be tight in any event because of the impact of higher inflation and rising interest rates on the government's debt interest payments, but added: "The one thing I can absolutely say is that our focus in the autumn statement will be on bringing down inflation and delivering the prime minister's goal to halve inflation and the Bank of England's target to get it down to 2%."

The chancellor's comments came as Catherine Mann, one of the nine members of the Bank's rate-setting monetary policy committee, said she would be prepared to cause damage to the economy by raising interest rates too far rather than take the risk of allowing inflation to become embedded.

In a speech to be given to the Canadian Association for Business Economics today, Mann will signal that she plans to vote for the Bank to raise interest rates for a 15th successive time when it meets next week. Financial markets are expecting a quarter-point increase to 5.5%.

"To pause or to hold the policy rate lower for longer risks inflation becoming more deeply embedded, which would require more tightening in total, to both change inflation itself and to wring out the embedded inflation that comes from the sustained duration above target. This is why I would rather err on the side of overtightening," Mann is due to say.

The Bank needed to send a message that it would do whatever necessary to bring the annual inflation rate - currently 6.8% - back to its 2% target "sooner rather than later".

National
Politics

MPs furious over being kept in the dark about alleged spying for China

Continued *from page 1*

Kirsty Blackman, a Scottish National party frontbencher, asked why parliament had only learned about the allegations from media reports over the weekend, and called for "a review into the decision-making process" as soon as possible.

Tim Loughton, a Conservative MP who has previously had sanctions imposed on him by China for criticising the country's regime, said no guidance had been provided to MPs by parliament's security authorities or the Foreign or Home Offices.

Responding directly to Blackman, Lindsay Hoyle, the Commons speaker, said that "the MPs who needed to be told were told" at the time of the arrest, which had quietly taken place in March. Investigators needed time to complete their inquiries, Hoyle added, describing the episode as "a major security issue".

The researcher, who is in his 20s, was arrested in Edinburgh at the same time as a second man in his 30s. It is understood he had links to the Tory MP Tom Tugendhat, until he became security minister, and subsequently Alicia Kearns, who chairs the foreign affairs select committee.

Only a small number of MPs appear to have been warned, with other members of the cross-party foreign affairs select committee saying they were not told about the arrest at the time. Police sources also confirmed to the Guardian there had been no public report of the arrests at the time.

A handful of senior ministers were aware of the situation, however. Rishi Sunak, the prime minister, told parliament that James Cleverly, the foreign secretary, had raised the matter in private with his counterparts when he visited China last month.

"I'm limited in what I can say specifically, but I've been emphatically clear in our engagement with China that we will not accept any interference in our democracy and parliamentary system," Sunak said, adding: "I can absolutely confirm that the foreign secretary raised these issues on his recent visit."

Parliament's security team is understood to have been "actively involved from the beginning" in the investigation, according to a senior parliamentary source. They said the authorities had worked with the security services to identify the researcher who was arrested.

The researcher, who is not being named by the Guardian for legal reasons, yesterday released a statement through his lawyers, denying the allegation he was a spy.

"It is vital that it is known that I am completely innocent," he said. "I have spent my career to date trying to educate others about the challenge and threats presented by the Chinese Communist party (CCP). To do what has been claimed against me in extravagant news reporting would be against everything I stand for."

The two men remain on police bail until an unspecified date in early October while investigators examine the case, which has prompted increased concerns about Beijing's willingness to spy on the UK.

The arrested parliamentary researcher has no family ties to China. Security sources said yesterday they believed it could represent a potential escalation by Beijing of its espionage activities. "If this is proved to have happened once, it is not likely to be an isolated incident," one former senior intelligence official said.

China has accused Britain of engaged in "nothing but malicious slander" in its response to the news of the arrests. A spokesperson for the Chinese embassy in the UK complained of "anti-China political manipulation" and urged the British leaders to "stop putting on such self-staged political farce".

Luke de Pulford of the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China, an international group of MPs and legislators monitoring human rights in the country, said: "This guy was arrested in March, so people around them don't know what their potential exposure to risk is. But we are also talking about people whose families are back home in China but who are working here, and are doing work that would open them up to accusations on the part of the CCP of working with foreign forces, for which they could face long periods of imprisonment."

Mark Sabah of the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation said he feared pro-democracy activists who shared personal information with British MPs could be at risk if any information had leaked to Beijing . "The big issue here, though, is that it's not the MPs who suffer most from this … It's actually the people who make approaches to lobby for causes like Tibet, Hong Kong and others who have genuine threats from the CCP and who are in need of genuine and safe channels to advocate," he said.

> *'The people who suffer are those who make approaches to lobby for causes like Tibet and Hong Kong'*
>
> **Mark Sabah**
> *Campaigner*



Analysis
Patrick Wintour



Allegations of espionage add fuel to simmering rivalries over Britain's stance towards Beijing

Many of the debates inside the Conservative party about how western democracies should handle China are entirely normal across Europe and the US, but somehow they have been conducted in a more heated and personalised way.

One reason may be the confused and slow leadership on China shown by the British government, symbolised by the refusal to follow Germany in publishing a China strategy. Others blame the entrenched factionalist political culture created by Brexit, and the narcissism of small differences. But the revelations that someone under investigation for allegedly being a Chinese spy was operating at the centre of Tory debates will only make the atmosphere worse. The person in question has insisted he is completely innocent.

In the Commons statement on the arrest of the parliamentary aide, all sides assailed ministers for being behind the curve, with many on the Tory benches aggrieved at being kept in the dark.

The China-watching scene in the UK has always been a crowded landscape, including Hong Kong Watch, UK-China Transparency, Beijing to Britain, the China Strategic Risks Institute, the Committee for Freedom in Hong Kong Foundation, the all-party parliamentary group on China and the China-Britain Business Council.

But it has been the Inter-Parliamentary Alliance on China and the China Research Group that dominate Conservative politics on China. Both are Sino-sceptic and back the pendulum swing away from the golden era of economic relations favoured by David Cameron in 2015. But it has been an open secret that the two groups have descended into rivalry.

The IPAC is a global, cross-party coalition in which Iain Duncan Smith plays a prominent role in the UK, but which managed to help persuade Labour to take a tough human rights stance on China including calling the treatment of Uyghur Muslims a genocide.

The CRG was initially led by Tom Tugendhat as the foreign affairs committee chair and, after his elevation to security minister, by Alicia Kearns, his successor as the committee chair. Setting up the CRG, Tugendhat said the aim was educational as much as factional, admitting he feared most Tory MPs would struggle to name a Chinese politician beyond the

▼ *A Met police officer stands guard outside parliament, which is at the centre of Chinese spying allegations*
PHOTOGRAPH: VICTORIA JONES/PA



president. From the backbenches he made the broad case for the UK to wake up to the changed threat from authoritarian regimes, and to follow Australia and screen British national infrastructure from Chinese investment. Similarly, he wanted the UK shot of Huawei.

CRG members think they have been "bloody effective" in quietly changing UK policy on TikTok, the Chinese takeover of a Newport microchip plant, Chinese covert police stations and the procurement bill. The CRG had intended to become the chief reasoned authority on China analysis at Westminster, only to discover that the inter group, backed by Luke de Pulford, made more waves tabling amendments to bills that often tied the Foreign Office in knots for months.

All sides assailed ministers for being behind the curve, with many on the Tory benches aggrieved at being kept in the dark

The two groups' disagreements about the nature of Chinese threat, worthy of a Foreign Affairs double issue, were often reduced to tabloid headlines. Should one decouple or de-risk? Is China a threat or a systemic challenge? Was a genocide being committed in Xinjiang, or a crime against humanity? The CRG was accused of being naive about the Chinese Communist party, the inter-parliamentary group of misunderstanding geopolitics.

The foreign affairs select committee report on China last month tore into the government's confused China policy, including the absence of a China strategy. "Some people seem to be on a personal mission to ruin the CRG," complained a committee member.

Ministers had been hoping the publication this week of their response to the intelligence and security committee report on China would be a golden opportunity to show how the engagement strategy, and recultivation of Chinese business ties, does not mean they are naive. But this week's revelations are hardly the perfect launch pad.



◀ *Rishi Sunak told MPs yesterday he had warned China's premier about 'completely unacceptable' actions*
PHOTOGRAPH: PIXEL8000

'Eager to engage' Aide moved easily in Westminster circles

Dan Sabbagh
Defence and security editor

MPs, aides and journalists who knew the parliamentary aide at the heart of the China spying allegations describe a young man eager to engage with politicians on the subject of Beijing during his time at Westminster.

The former researcher, who has not been named by police, is described as being in his 20s. He held a parliamentary pass, which requires the sponsorship of an MP, giving him relatively free access to Westminster's rambling parliamentary estate.

During a couple of years around the Commons, he moved mainly in Conservative circles, with links to Tom Tugendhat then Alicia Kearns, before his arrest in March, accused of breaching the Official Secrets Act.

Tugendhat has been security minister for the past year, and is not thought to have been associated with the researcher during his time in government, while Kearns chairs the foreign affairs select committee.

Both MPs have said relatively little since news of the arrest was made public over the weekend. On Saturday, Kearns said she could not comment while the work of MI5, the police and prosecutors continued.

Kearns's point was reinforced by the Commons speaker, Lindsay Hoyle, yesterday, who urged MPs not to discuss the case in the house, a demand they complied with in the debates that followed.

Backbenchers such as Kearns , and Tugendhat at the time, would have been very unlikely to have handled top secret or other classified information that is the heart of the business of government.

But aides such as theirs do form part of the dense network of news and gossip around Westminster, knowledgable about which MPs are on the up or down, who is close to whom and about the underlying informal issues that are the business of politics.

Noa Hoffman, a political reporter with the Sun newspaper, wrote yesterday that she had been matched with the aide at the centre of the allegations on the Hinge dating app, describing him as "attractive, clearly into sports and had a thriving social life". But, despite trying to arrange a date, they had never managed to meet up.

But there is also evidence of attempted contact with Labour. Before the researcher was arrested, Westminster sources said, he met a Labour adviser to discuss the opposition party's stance on China.

The Guardian understands the aide, who was educated in the UK, spent a couple of years in China, but he has no familial links to the country, making allegations of his acting for Beijing all the more unusual.

Yesterday, he broke his silence, and argued in a statement released through his lawyers, a leading human rights firm, that he had been"forced to respond to the media accusations that I am a 'Chinese spy'", and insisted: "I am completely innocent".

"I have spent my career to date trying to educate others about the challenge and threats presented by the Chinese Communist party. To do what has been claimed against me in extravagant news reporting would be against everything I stand for," he added, without revealing his name.

It will be for police and prosecutors to determine what happens next. For now, the researcher remains on police bail until an unspecified date in early October, with officers from the Met's counter-terrorism command, which has responsibility for espionage related offences, taking the lead.

The claims

What we know – and don't know – so far

What are the allegations?
That the man, a Briton in his 20s who worked in Westminster and had a parliamentary pass, is alleged to have spied for China.

He was arrested in March in Edinburgh under the Official Secrets Act, with another man, in his 30s, held in Oxfordshire. Both have been bailed until next month.

What is he alleged to have spied on?
This is not known, and the former researcher released a statement through his lawyers yesterday morning saying he was "completely innocent".

It is also not known what, if any, information the man may have potentially had access to. He is said to have been in contact with some senior Tory MPs, including Alicia Kearns, who chairs the Commons foreign affairs committee, and Tom Tugendhat, the security minister – although in the case of Tugendhat, before he became a minister.

Has the man been named?
No, not by the police or by most of the media – although one newspaper, the Times, did so. The police do not normally name suspects unless they are charged, giving basic details such as gender, approximate age, where they were arrested, and the alleged offence.

What has the suspect said?
In his statement, he vehemently rejected any wrongdoing, saying: "I have spent my career to date trying to educate others about the … threats presented by the Chinese Communist party. To do what has been claimed against me in extravagant news reporting would be against everything I stand for."



Alicia Kearns, the Commons foreign affairs committee chair

Is the government going to designate China as a threat?
This seems very unlikely, not least as it would put the UK out of step with many allies. Unlike his immediate predecessor, Liz Truss, Rishi Sunak seems content to challenge China on human rights and Hong Kong, but also engage, with James Cleverly visiting Beijing last month, the first UK foreign secretary to do so in five years.

Is China spying on MPs?
Irrespective of this particular case – almost certainly, yes. China's intelligence and espionage infrastructure is vast and sweeping, in the country and in seeking to gather information overseas.

Speaking yesterday, the former head of MI6 Sir Alex Younger said the UK should expect attempts to gain information and influence by infiltration, calling these "an intrinsic part of the way in which China seeks to protect its power".
Peter Walker

Sketch
John Crace



Let me tell you a secret. If you need a statement that says almost nothing, call Dowden

It was all as clear as mud. There was plenty of outrage - of course there was: there always is when MPs have plenty of time on their hands. Politicians are always happy to fill the vacuum in government with outrage. Outrage that China had allegedly set up a top operative to spy on both Alicia Kearns and the security minister Tom Tugendhat.

Outrage that China had so little respect for the UK that it allegedly only bothered to send a wet-behind-the-ears intern to spy on parliament. Outrage that the spy might not even be a spy. He has yet to be charged with any offence after being arrested in March. He says he is completely innocent.

Allegedly this sketch could not be written without a liberal sprinkling of the word allegedly. Section 1.1.B of the 1911 Official Secrets Act says that any person who makes a sketch that might be indirectly useful to an enemy shall be guilty of felony. So really the only way forward is to try to write a sketch that only has UK interests at heart. Consider it done. Allegedly.

Here's what we know so far. We have an alleged spy who cannot be named whose name everyone knows because one paper has decided to make it public. An alleged spy who insists through his lawyer that he isn't a spy. Just someone with an interest in what Tory politicians think about China. There again you wouldn't expect a spy to admit he was a spy. Or maybe he was a spy who didn't even know he was a spy. Just a useful idiot.

It's all most confusing. Think about it. Why on earth would the Chinese want to expend espionage resources on finding out what Kearns and Tugendhat thought about the Chinese? Neither have been exactly secretive about their views on China. If you want to know what they think, you only have to phone them. Failing that you could just listen to them on the news. They are two of the most gobby MPs in Westminster.

If the Chinese were serious about their intelligence gathering, they would be trying to find out what some of the more obscure Tory backbenchers think about them. The MPs who are seldom seen in Westminster and almost never say a word about anything. Maybe Beijing could do us all a favour and try and find out if there is any sign of intelligent life in these MPs. None has been detected so far.

In the Commons, the speaker, Lindsay Hoyle, reminded MPs that police investigations were continuing and nothing should be said to prejudice them. Nor should the house discuss security issues.

Rather ruling out MPs discussing almost everything to do with the case. Which made one wonder why Hoyle had allowed a ministerial statement later in the afternoon. But Kearns, Tugendhat and Iain Duncan Smith, the Tories' self-elected leader of the China hawks, all nodded seriously before leaving the chamber. Presumably to report back to their handlers. Allegedly.

Still, if you want a government minister to make a statement on spying in which almost nothing of interest or relevance is said, then the deputy prime minister, Oliver Dowden, is your man. He is a man genetically coded to fill blank space with dead air. So he wanted to apologise for saying nothing. But he did want everyone to know he took the China threat very seriously. So the UK had warned China to behave itself. But please, please can we carry on trading.

Labour's Yvette Cooper sounded somewhat sceptical. Was this it?

> *Why on earth would the Chinese want to expend espionage resources on finding out what two of the most gobby MPs in Westminster thought?*

Labour viewed national security as a cross-party issue but would quite like the Tories to up their game. Had Rishi Sunak and James Cleverly raised this case in their dealings with the Chinese before the story broke at the weekend? Er, yes they had, mumbled Dowden. Just rather quietly. This was the way international diplomacy worked when you were the smaller nation wanting something.

The rest of the session was something of a pile-on from Tories unwilling to accept the new world order. Julian Lewis, the chair of the international security committee, wondered if the government had been a little previous in dismissing his report as out of date.

Even Dominic Raab made an appearance. Looking very suntanned. He was seething that China was a bigger bully than him.

There was time for comic relief. Cue Labour's Barry Gardiner trying to explain how the Chinese woman who had paid him £500,000 for doing apparently nothing had never been charged for anything. She was a free woman and he was a free man. Cue Tory Matt Warman declaring that Dowden was actually the hero. Imagine. Our entire national security depending on Olly. The man not afraid to stand up to China. Well. Only a bit. Make that a lot. Allegedly.

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◀ *Flt Lt Colin Bell with a reproduction Messerschmitt Me 262, one of the German planes he encountered as a second world war pilot*
PHOTOGRAPH: LISA HARDING/STORY PICTURE AGENCY

'I call it money for old rope' RAF veteran, 102, to abseil for charity

Esther Addley

When Colin Bell finally retired as a valuer about three years ago, it was because "I decided I had paid the chancellor of the exchequer enough money in tax", he says. And given he was pushing 100 at the time, few could argue with that.

Taxes are far from Bell's only contribution to the nation, however. As Flt Lt Bell he was a Mosquito bomber pilot during the second world war, flying 50 bombing raids over Germany, an experience he describes modestly as "a bit hairy".

Now 102, Bell has embarked on another remarkable feat: a fundraising challenge including three days of walking between places that were significant to his wartime service in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk. On Thursday he will also abseil 17 storeys down the side of the Royal London hospital, from Europe's highest elevated helipad.

He is raising money for the London Air Ambulance, the Royal College of Nursing Foundation and the RAF Benevolent Fund. "I may be 102 years old, but I want to do my bit and raise money for these amazing charities. I'm glad to be doing something that can help - quite frankly, at my age, I'm glad to be doing anything!"

He completed his walks last month. Stage one was from Churchill College, Cambridge ("seen off by Randolph Churchill, the great-grandson of the formidable Sir Winston") to the American military cemetery in Madingley. "I wanted to pay tribute to the 3,800 American servicemen who lost their lives defending us … they should be recognised."

On day two, Bell visited RAF Wyton, where he had completed his conversion training on Mosquito bombers, and the following day he walked to RAF Downham Market in Norfolk, from where he had flown as a member of 608 squadron. Precise distances were not recorded, since "when you're 102, two miles can feel like 22", explains an aide.

Of flying his missions on the tiny, wooden-framed Mosquitos, being traced by searchlights and hammered by anti-aircraft fire, he recalls: "That was not so difficult, because the Mosquito was the best plane in world war two and it could fly faster than any propeller-driven German light fighter.

> *'I want to do my bit … at my age, I'm glad to be doing anything!'*
>
> **Colin Bell**
> *Former RAF pilot*

"So yes. It was all a bit hairy. But it could have been a lot worse." It was the heavy bomber crews, flying from the same base, who were "the real heroes", he says. "They flew much more vulnerable and slower aircraft, and they suffered far higher casualties than we did."

After those experiences, abseiling down a skyscraper holds no fear. "As I'm raising money for charity, I call it money for old rope. Though actually I hope it is a very sound rope."

Bell was demobilised in 1946 and trained as a chartered surveyor, eventually running his own business with his son - who retired at the same time as his father.

So how does he account for his physical and mental fitness? "A combination of exercise, alcohol, and the love of good women with the odd bad one thrown in." His beloved wife, Kathlyn, died seven years ago after 73 years of marriage.

"The truth is, it's largely a matter of luck," says Bell. "It is the genes that you're born with. And of course, one has to assume that you live a reasonably healthy life and you don't succumb to drugs, sex and rock'n'roll."

Activists back Garraway in struggle to secure essential care for husband

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

Social care campaigners have backed the TV presenter Kate Garraway after she revealed she was "battling the system" to secure essential care for her severely ill husband, Derek Draper. The Good Morning Britain presenter said at the weekend that she feared her husband could lose the support he needed, and that she was getting just four hours' sleep a night.

Draper, a former New Labour adviser, needs 24-hour help after being admitted to hospital with Covid in 2020. The family faces an imminent adjudication on what care he will be eligible for. It could be significantly reduced to a single care worker, or removed altogether, Garraway fears.

Care Rights UK, which supports people needing social care, said the family's experience was "all too familiar" and that its helpline received daily calls from families "struggling to get the care they need to live with dignity".

Shortages of care workers mean that 165,000 posts are vacant in England, and a budget squeeze on councils is contributing to a care waiting list of about 430,000 people. Garraway told the Sunday Times: "Even if I gave up my job and became his sole carer, I would have to stay awake 24 hours a day, and I don't have the specialist skills he needs. But I am determined to keep battling the system. Not just for Derek, but for the millions of others struggling."

Families needing care help from the state must ask their local council for a "care needs assessment", after which a care package may or may not be allocated. If it is, it will be subject to a means test.

Jackdaws will ditch friends if there's a meal in it for them, study finds

Steven Morris

Blood may be thicker than water when it comes to human relationships and it appears the same is true of jackdaws after scientists found they readily switched friends to gain food but stuck with family even at the risk of going hungry.

A study of jackdaw colonies in west Cornwall established that the small crows ditched old friends and made new ones if it helped them get rewards but stuck with family through thick and thin.

The scientists presented wild jackdaws - highly gregarious birds - with a task in which access to tasty mealworms depended on which individuals visited together.

Although the birds soon switched friends to get the best rewards, they stuck with their offspring, siblings and mating partners (jackdaws pair for life) no matter the outcome.

The study, part of the decade-long Cornish Jackdaw Project, provides insight into how some animals manage social relationships.

Alex Thornton, a professor of cognitive evolution at the University of Exeter's Penryn campus in Cornwall, said: "We monitor hundreds of wild jackdaws, each of which is fitted with a transponder embedded in a leg ring.

"In this experiment we randomly assigned jackdaws to two groups and programmed a pair of automated feeders to provide mealworms only if individuals from the same group visited together."

If birds from different groups arrived together the feeders would remain closed. Solo jackdaws would get grain but not the more desirable mealworms.

Thornton said: "The jackdaws turned out to be very strategic, quickly learning to ditch friends from the other group so they could get the best rewards. However, they made an exception when it came to their close relations - even if they got nothing.

"What we were able to do here was test the idea: can individuals keep track of the outcomes of past interactions and update their relationships? It turns out they can."

The findings were published in the journal Nature Communications.



▲ *Jackdaws would stick with family even if it meant them going hungry*

Pakistani police find siblings of Sara Sharif at grandfather's home

Haroon Janjua

Five children of a man who fled to Pakistan with his wife and brother before his 10-year-old daughter Sara Sharif was found dead in Surrey were taken into custody by police in Pakistan yesterday.

The children were recovered from the home of Urfan Sharif's father, Muhammad Sharif, in the north-eastern city of Jhelum during a raid by dozens of police officers.

It has been a month since Sharif arrived in Pakistan and called 999 in the UK to report that his daughter was dead at his home in Horsell, near Woking in Surrey. A postmortem found she had suffered "multiple and extensive injuries" over a "sustained and extended" period of time.

Sharif, 41, left the UK with Sara's stepmother, Beinash Batool, 29; five other children, aged between one and 13; and his brother, Faisal Malik, 28.

Nasir Mehmood Bajwa, a Jhelum district police officer, said: "Police with a heavy contingent on Monday evening raided [Muhammad] Sharif's residence in Jhelum and recovered five children. They are healthy and in good condition."

Bajwa said Pakistani police had broken the locks of the gate, entered the house and confiscated CCTV cameras. He said they were continuing to search for Sharif, Batool and Malik. Police in Pakistan have raided more than 20 properties in the search.

The Sharif family's lawyer, Raja Haq Nawaz, said he had not known the children were in their grandfather's home.

The BBC reported that a neighbour said: "Police officers, including female officers, raided the house. They broke the CCTV at the entrance and entered it. While inside, more officers arrived outside and stopped the traffic. They stopped everyone from filming on their mobile phones."

Sara's grandfather told the BBC he had been hiding the children in his home but would not say how long they had been there.

"Since they came from the UK, I didn't let them go," he told the BBC.

"I told Urfan and Beinash that they can go wherever they want to, but I will not let the children go with you. Until today, no one had asked me about the children.

"They kept asking me about Urfan, Faisal and Beinash, no one asked me about the children."

He had previously denied being in contact with his son or knowing where the family was.

Sharif and Batool appeared in a video released to the media by relatives last week.

Batool, who was the only one to speak in the video, said: "Sara's death was an incident" and gave no other comment about her stepdaughter or the circumstances of her death.

She went on to say: "Our family in Pakistan are severely affected by all that is going on. My main concern is that Pakistani police will torture or kill us. That is why we have gone into hiding."

Muhammad Sharif said at the weekend that negotiations were taking place over the trio's safe transfer to UK authorities.





▲ From left, Urfan Sharif, his daughter Sara, who was found dead at his Surrey home last month, and Sara's stepmother, Beinash Batool

> *'Police recovered five children. They are healthy and in good condition'*
>
> **Nasir Mehmood Bajwa**
> *District police officer*



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Victim's mother says ministers too slow to outlaw bully XL dogs




▲ *Ana Paun, 11, was treated in hospital on Saturday after being attacked by a bully XL in Birmingham; Jack Lis, 10, was killed by the same breed in 2021*

Steven Morris

The mother of a 10-year-old boy who was killed by an American bully XL dog has launched a scathing attack on the UK government for not acting sooner to ban the breed.

Emma Whitfield, whose son Jack Lis was fatally wounded two years ago, criticised Suella Braverman, the home secretary, for saying she had commissioned "urgent advice" on outlawing the dogs after an attack on an 11-year-old girl in Birmingham was filmed and posted on social media.

Writing on X, previously known as Twitter, Whitfield said: "It's crazy how this video has gone viral and now politicians are coming out of the woodwork saying how bad it is.

"Where were you when my son was killed? Where were you when other innocent people were killed? Where were you when I was at parliament asking for change? Nowhere.

"If you're going to do something, please do it. Stop pussyfooting around the 'breed neutral' bull crap and do something."

The term "breed neutral" refers to the idea that public safety is better protected when laws do not outlaw particular breeds and owners are held accountable for how their dog is cared for and controlled.

Whitfield's son was attacked by a bully XL named Beast in Caerphilly, south Wales, in November 2021. Brandon Hayden and Amy Salter were jailed after admitting being in charge of the out-of-control dog.

Braverman's tweet, posted on Sunday in reaction to the Birmingham attack, said: "This is appalling. The American XL bully is a clear and lethal danger to our communities, particularly to children. We can't go on like this. I have commissioned urgent advice on banning them."

Yesterday West Midlands police said the dog involved in the attack in Bordesley Green in Birmingham on Saturday was a "crossbreed bully XL/Staffordshire bull terrier puppy".

The force said the girl needed hospital treatment and two other people sustained injuries. Officers are waiting to interview the owner, who is in hospital. The dog is being kept in a secure kennel.

The girl who was injured, Ana Paun, said the dog jumped on her as she was shopping with her sister.

She said: "I just felt panic. The dog was staring at me. He jumped on my arm and bit me. It was so scary. I was screaming. He let my arm go and then bit my shoulder.

"I want him [the dog] to go away, to die. I think all of the dogs, the bulldogs, all of them should be banned. The owner should be in prison because he never did anything, he just let the dog bite everyone."

Mark Drakeford, the Welsh first minister, called for the breed to be banned.

He said: "I think the UK government should get on with it, and get on with it as fast as possible. The 1991 Dangerous Dogs Act is non-devolved and it's in the hands of the UK government. I think they should have acted already, and I certainly think they need to act now."

Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, said there was a "strong case" for banning the breed.

Downing Street said the government took the issue of American bully XL dogs "extremely seriously".

"The footage we saw over the weekend was shocking. I know that the police are investigating that specific incident," Rishi Sunak's spokesperson said.

Nature or nurture? Experts say breed bans oversimplify the problem

Linda Geddes
Science correspondent

Dog bans are back on the table, with Suella Braverman declaring American bully XL dogs a "clear and lethal danger to our communities, particularly to children".

Bully XLs are a relatively new type of dog, which means the risk of them biting someone hasn't been scientifically studied. Usually standing more than 50cm (19.6in) tall, and weighing as much as 60kg (130lb), they certainly attract attention, but are not recognised as a specific breed by the UK Kennel Club. It is unclear which breeds they have descended from - although they are likely to have included pit bull terriers, American bulldogs and American staffordshire bull terriers.

According to Bully Watch, a group aiming to raise awareness of attacks by large pitbull-related dogs, such breeds have been responsible for 351 attacks in the UK this year. However, they are not the only dogs implicated in recent fatal attacks - with rottweilers, a husky and a cane corso (a type of mastiff) also having killed people in the UK in the past three years - and trying to pin aggression on specific breeds is difficult, scientists say.



PHOTOGRAPH: CHARLES BRUTLAG/ALAMY

> *Bully XLs are a relatively new breed, which means the risk of them biting someone hasn't been scientifically studied*

Research suggests a dog's behaviour is more influenced by nurture than nature. In one recent study, researchers compared behavioural tendencies such as impulsivity and sensitivity to stimuli - known to trigger aggressive responses - between eight dog breeds that are legislated against (including pit bull types), and 17 breeds that are not. This suggested breed alone was a poor predictor of aggression.

"While on average, there might be differences between one breed of dog and another, the variation within a breed almost always means there's overlap," said Daniel Mills, a professor of veterinary behavioural medicine at the University of Lincoln, who led the research. Suggesting that certain breeds are more problematic than others was "an oversimplification, it is headline-grabbing, and it is unhelpful", he added.

That's not to say genes don't have any role, he added. About 20 years ago there was a particular line of golden retrievers that were very aggressive as puppies. However, "people weren't going to suddenly start banning golden retrievers", Mills said.

> **351**
> *Number of attacks so far this year by large pitbull-related dogs, according to the campaign group Bully Watch*

Carri Westgarth, a professor in human-animal interaction at the University of Liverpool, agreed that across dog breeds, certain breeding lines tended to have puppies that were more prone to aggression. However, it wasn't just about genetics, she said: "If the mother was stressed when she was carrying the puppies, those stress hormones will predispose the puppies to be more fearful and reactive."

How puppies are initially socialised also matters - something owners may have little control over, as it is often in the breeders' hands.

Also muddying the water is the fact that XL bullys and other powerful dog breeds may be more desirable to certain types of individuals. "Whereas a lot of owners will look to socialise their dog to make sure that they get on well with people, for some owners, having a dog that growls at people does their ego a lot of good," said Mills, adding that this didn't apply to all bully XL owners.

Yet the majority of dogs that are involved in deaths tend to be large and powerful. So should we ban the larger breeds? Westgarth worries that new breeds would simply fill the gap, as has happened with bully XLs following the UK bans on pit bull terriers, Japanese tosas, dogo Argentinos and fila Brasileiros.

"Although you do occasionally get unprovoked attacks, the vast majority of dog attacks are due to irresponsible ownership, irresponsible owner behaviour, or irresponsible behaviour around dogs," Mills said.

Better than breed-specific bans would be a concerted effort to tackle poor breeding practices and to improve education on how to have safe interactions with dogs; how to train them; and the introduction of social norms such as never leaving children alone with dogs, Westgarth suggested.

'The situation is catastrophic': Moroccan quake death toll nears 2,700 as hopes of rescue fade

Continued from page 1

such situations could be counterproductive". Morocco's King Mohammed VI thanked foreign countries for their offers of help.

Friday's 6.8-magnitude quake, Morocco's deadliest in more than six decades, had its epicentre below an isolated cluster of mountainous villages 45 miles south of Marrakech, shaking infrastructure as far away as the country's northern coast.

The interior ministry announced yesterday that the death toll had surpassed 2,681 with 2,501 injured, amid expectations that the overall death toll could rise as rescue teams reach remote mountain villages. Drone footage from TV channels has shown mud-brick houses flattened.

"Until now, we have found no survivors, only the dead buried under the rubble … the smell of corpses is very, very strong. We still have no electricity and no water," said Aziz, a villager from Ijoukak, 10 miles from the quake's epicentre. Aid and emergency workers had finally arrived in the village.

Hamlets in the hills around Ijoukak, however, remained inaccessible. "Even the mules and the donkeys couldn't get up there as there are huge boulders blocking the roads." Footage shared by the Moroccan government showed soldiers digging frantically among towering piles of rubble and using dogs in the faint hope of finding any survivors, as bodies shrouded in blankets were lined up nearby.

Many feared the combined difficulties of accessing remote mountain villages as well as a delayed emergency response heavily reliant on approval from the royal palace were impeding rescue efforts. Television channels showed images of military helicopters flying over mountainous areas close to the epicentre, hurling aid from the craft.

Civilian rescuers described rushing to reach remote villages while many across the peaks of the Atlas mountains remained inaccessible. Villagers from across the remote Al Haouz region said they had dug at the rubble with their bare hands to free their trapped neighbours.

"The villagers helped dig through the rubble and search for survivors," said Mustapha Abbou, a volunteer aid worker from the Al Haouz region, currently in the village of Azgour in the Atlas mountains.

"Right now, the areas that remain hardest to reach are the rural communities of Ijoukak, Ighil, and Aghbar, close to the epicentre of the earthquake. Some aid has reached the town of Ijoukak, but the area also includes smaller hamlets further up in the mountains. If we can't get there by car, we will take food supplies up there using motorbikes or donkeys."

The Moroccan prime minister, Aziz Akhannouch, whose family includes survivors of a deadly earthquake in Agadir in 1960, said the country could be "proud of the spontaneous solidarity of Moroccans".

Omar Saadoune, a civil society activist, speaking from Casablanca, described his communications with residents of remote mountain villages in Al Haouz.

"The situation is catastrophic, many houses completely crumbled. As these were homes largely made

'We feel forgotten' Despair in villages turned to rubble

Peter Beaumont
Tafeghaghte

As the dirt roads leading to some of the areas worst hit in Friday's earthquake in Morocco were gradually cleared, the full extent of the disaster was being revealed, including whole villages destroyed in Al-Haouz province.

In the tiny hamlet of Tarouiste, in the Atlas mountain foothills above the town of Amizmiz, not one of a dozen houses was left standing. Only the village mosque had not been reduced to rubble.

With the first international search and rescue teams finally deploying to the worst-affected areas yesterday, after a disaster that has claimed at least 2,500 lives, it was clear that the window to find anyone alive beneath the rubble was rapidly closing.

As relief efforts stepped up a gear, the Guardian visited mountain villages that had been almost entirely destroyed, where residents said they felt they had been abandoned. In Tarouiste, people described how they had been left to carry the dead bodies of six neighbours down the mountain where they were met by cars, as no ambulances or other government aid had yet reached them.



▲ *Rescue workers carry a quake victim through the devastated Moroccan mountain village of Tnirt*
PHOTOGRAPH: PIERO CRUCIATTI/ANADOLU/GETTY

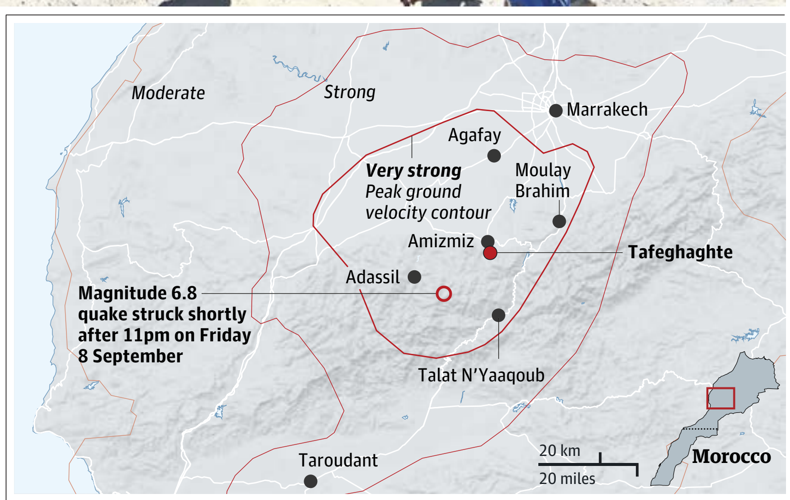
"No one has come to help us," said Hassan al-Mati, whose mother was one of those who died, with frustration in his voice. "We need trucks to come to help us move the dead animals buried in the rubble. We need tents and food. We feel like we have been abandoned.

"Six people died in this village and six others were injured. We had to carry them down to the river where we could take them to the hospital in cars."

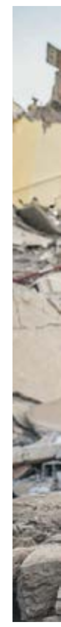
Like many across these mountains, the villagers of Tarouiste were now sleeping in the open. Hassan took the Guardian to meet his family, who were sitting on carpets shaded from the sun by sheets stretched on wooden poles. Two of the children had uncovered wounds on their faces where they had been hit by falling debris. Two of the women were still visibly in shock, one bursting into tears.

Asked about other villages higher in the mountains, the residents of Tarouiste listed the ones they had news about, all of them similarly damaged.

Ten minutes' drive away, the scene in Tafeghaghte was more shocking still. Residents said 90 people had died here, in a village of about 400 that has existed for



Source: USGS. Note: peak ground velocity is the greatest speed of shaking recorded at particular point during anearthquake. Times are local





of mud bricks, when they collapsed they also buried people, which also makes the possibility of finding people alive more difficult."

Prof Mehrdad Sasani, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at Northeastern University in the US, said the cheaper mud-brick houses increased the risk of deaths during an earthquake.

Residents and experts of the affected region have long pointed to neglect by the state, particularly a lack of basic infrastructure across Al Haouz. "These types of structure are very brittle, meaning they don't have the capacity for flexibility and movement required during an earthquake," said Sasani.

In addition, he added, when the homes collapsed it did not allow for any air pockets that could allow survivors to continue to breathe.

"These homes have heavy walls that carry the weight of the roofs. When these come down, it leads to a higher likelihood of casualties," Sasani said.

Aid France 'ready to help' despite recent rifts

France's foreign minister has said it is up to Morocco whether to seek French aid in dealing with the earthquake.

Catherine Colonna said France had pledged €5m (£4.3m) to aid organisations in the country, but it was for Morocco to decide who it officially asked for assistance.

Diplomatic relations between Paris and Rabat have been glacial for years and Morocco's decision to accept help from just four countries – the UK, Spain, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates – is seen as indicative of not just a political rift but personal rancour between Emmanuel Macron and King Mohammed VI.

Colonna told BFM TV: "We are ready to help Morocco. It is a sovereign decision and Morocco alone is entitled to determine what its needs are." Macron has indicated several times France's willingness to send aid but there has been no official response.

Morocco has previously accused Macron of prioritising good relations with Algeria over those with Rabat.

In 2021, Paris accused Rabat of trying to spy on Macron via his mobile phone after the number was discovered in Pegasus project data, an accusation the king rejected.

Relations deteriorated further this year when Rabat accused France of being behind a European parliament vote condemning the threat to press freedom in Morocco.

Both countries have withdrawn their ambassadors. In March, after Macron said his relationship with the king was "friendly", Rabat responded that relations were "neither friendly nor good".
Kim Willsher *Paris*





▲ *People in the devastated remote mountain village of Imi N'Tala. Left, children in Adassil receive food aid*
PHOTOGRAPH: MATIAS CHIOFALO/AFP/GETTY

centuries. While the bodies of the dead had been dug out, remains of animals lay in the rubble, causing a smell that permeated the place.

Almost every person to whom the Guardian spoke told a story of horrific loss, some involving entire families. Abdelkebr ait al Ghouinbaz was standing on the ruined wall of his house surveying where his family had died. Two relatives were clambering through the rubble to recover what was left of his possessions.

As they gathered up bedding, one of the men removed an envelope with a picture of a young woman in a white headscarf. She had died in the collapsed bedroom.

"My wife, my father and my daughter were all killed," Abdelkebr said. "I am alive because when I heard the noise [of the earthquake] I moved faster."

Other villagers told the same story. "There are no houses left," said Taib ait Laghoubas, who lost his parents in a house where only the door and frame could still be seen standing. "Everything is gone. I was inside my house when it happened. It took just a matter of seconds. There was no chance for people to escape. My neighbours helped get me out."

He added: "We have food. That's not a problem. The biggest problem is that it is cold at night and we have no tents, no beds or clothes."

Taib said the Moroccan army had come to help in the immediate aftermath, bringing search dogs and helping dig people out of the rubble, but what they needed now was not coming. Asked whether there was anything to stay for, Taib said he would remain despite the devastation. "People will stay because they were born here. *Amin, amin*," he added softly, appealing to God for peace.

It was a picture that was not limited to one corner of these mountains but had become familiar across a vast swath of the Atlas. Footage from the remote village of Imi N'Tala filmed by a Spanish rescuer, Antonio Nogales, of the aid group United Firefighters Without Borders, showed men and dogs clambering over steep slopes covered in rubble.

"The level of destruction is … absolute," Nogales said, struggling to find the right word to describe what he was seeing. "Not a single house has stayed upright. We're going to start our search with dogs and see whether we can find anyone alive."

While aid efforts struggled to reach even these villages relatively close to the main road, rescuers were converging on the city of Amizmiz. Tented encampments for those who had lost their homes were appearing on every available patch of open ground and aid distributions were visible.

Rescue workers cautioned that the chances of finding more survivors were very slim, not least because the most heavily damaged buildings were made of clay brick that disintegrated as they collapsed.

"It's difficult to pull people out alive because most of the walls and ceilings turned to earthen rubble when they fell, burying whoever was inside without leaving air space," a military worker told Reuters.

In a field just outside Amizmiz, Moroccan troops and recently arrived international rescue teams, including a British government-deployed team that had arrived the night before, were setting up an extensive encampment.

"We arrived late last night," said Russ Gordon, the British team leader. "At the moment we are still assessing. We're still just in the window of 72-96 hours where it is possible that someone who is entombed might be able to survive if they have access to liquids. Until it's called, we will operate as a search and rescue operation before moving to a recovery effort."

Up to 2,000 feared dead after rainstorm causes floods in eastern Libya

Patrick Wintour
Benghazi

As many as 2,000 people may have been drowned after a powerful storm unleashed catastrophic floods in the eastern Libyan city of Derna, according to the head of one of the country's two rival governments.

Ossama Hamad, the prime minister of the eastern-based government, said yesterday that thousands were believed missing after torrential rains over the weekend.

The Red Crescent in Benghazi had put the death toll closer to 250, but the worst-hit area remained largely cut off with local leaders saying the situation in the city was "out of control" and a catastrophe.

A spokesperson for the Libyan army in the east, Maj Gen Ahmed Al-Mismari, suggested that as many as 5,000 to 6,000 were missing in Derna, which has a population of 100,000.

The precise number of people who have died is hard to gauge with communications down and administration hampered by a decade-long battle for power between rival governments backed by militias.

Aid agencies and Gulf states such as the United Arab Emirates were rushing emergency aid to the region, with local officials saying they needed stretchers, food and water.

The deaths occurred after a powerful storm and heavy floods led to the collapse of two old dams, which released a swollen, fast-moving river that simply washed away at least one neighborhood.

It is not known how many people were sleeping in flats in the path of the flooding when it arrived.

Residents realised the dams had collapsed under the weight of the water when they heard an explosion in the middle of the night.

One resident said on social media: "After sunrise we went out to the streets of Derna, but the streets were not there." Another Derna resident, Ahmed Mohamed, said: "We were asleep and when we woke up we found water besieging the house. We are inside and trying to get out."

> *'We were asleep and when we woke up we found water besieging the house'*
>
> **Ahmed Mohamed**
> *Derna resident*

The Derna municipal council said on its Facebook page that "the situation is catastrophic and out of control".

It called for international intervention and the opening of a sea corridor owing to the collapse of most of the city's roads.

Kais Fhakeri, of the Red Crescent, said: "We recorded at least 150 deaths after the collapse of buildings.

"We expect the death toll to rise to 250. The situation is very catastrophic."

Heavy floods washed away vehicles, footage broadcast by eastern Libya's Almostakbal TV showed.

The channel also posted pictures of a collapsed road between Sousse and Shahat, home to the Unesco-listed archaeological site Cyrene..

Libya's eastern-based parliament declared three days of mourning.

Abdulhamid al-Dbeibah, the rival UN-recognised Libyan prime minister based in the capital, Tripoli, also announced three days of mourning in all the affected cities, calling them "disaster areas".

Dbeibah's government is recognised by the central bank of Libya, which disburses funds to government departments across the country.

Four oil ports – Ras Lanuf, Zueitina, Brega and Es Sidra – were closed from Saturday evening.

The storm struck eastern Libya on Sunday afternoon, hitting the coastal town of Jabal al-Akhdar and Benghazi, where a curfew was declared and schools closed for several days.

▼ *A section of road near the city of Shahhat that was partially washed away following torrential rainfall*
PHOTOGRAPH: OMAR JARHMAN/REUTERS



Firms' anti-slavery declarations 'a box-ticking exercise', says MP

Peter Walker
Deputy political editor

Campaigners and MPs have said anti-slavery declarations made mandatory by Theresa May risk becoming "a pointless box-ticking exercise" after it emerged ministers had taken assurances from one previously slavery-linked company on trust.

Ministers gave IGT, a US gaming corporation that is the technology partner to the national lottery operator, Camelot, a clean bill of health even though the company had previously reported significant potential slavery risks in its supply chain.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) said it was not responsible for scrutinising companies' anti-slavery claims.

Under the 2015 Modern Slavery Act, helmed by May when she was home secretary, larger companies that operate in the UK must publish an annual statement connected to modern slavery. Anti-slavery groups have said the law does not oblige them to set out what exposure they have to slavery or how they are trying to reduce this.

In its 2017 statement, IGT said an analysis of its suppliers found 9% had a high risk of exposure to modern slavery and 18% a medium risk.

Subsequent annual reports cited efforts to tackle the issue but gave no details about how or whether this had been successful in reducing the exposure.

The most recent report detailed more anti-slavery work with suppliers, concluding that the company had not uncovered anything "that might suggest an increase in the likelihood or severity of modern slavery risks".

A spokesperson for IGT said the company had "improved our practices aimed at reducing modern slavery risk in our supply chain since 2017", continually monitored its supply chain to this end and was committed to reducing any potential connections to slavery.

Pauline Latham, the Conservative MP for Mid Derbyshire, who is a member of the Commons international development committee, said: "There's no point having these anti-slavery declarations if it just becomes a pointless box-ticking exercise."

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More English councils forecast to fail owing billions

Richard Partington
Economics correspondent

More English councils are expected to fail owing billions of pounds in debts, a leading credit ratings agency has warned, amid an escalating crisis for local government after years of budget cuts and mismanagement.

In a report in the wake of the financial meltdown at Birmingham city council, Moody's said several other local authorities were close to issuing pre-insolvency warnings and listed the 20 most-indebted in England relative to size.

The country's largest local authority in effect declared itself bankrupt last week, having issued a section 114 notice – signalling that it does not have the resources to balance its budget. It followed similar recent failures at cash-strapped councils including Woking, Croydon, Thurrock and Slough.

Moody's said councils were under pressure from the falling value of commercial property investments, high inflation, rising interest rates, and demand for social care services.

It blamed cuts to local authority funding under the Conservatives' austerity drive since 2010 for fuelling higher levels of debt, and said the decision to scrap the Audit Commission in David Cameron's "bonfire of the quangos" had ca used a lack of external scrutiny.

"We expect more English local authorities to fail over the near term," it said in the report. "Borrowing for commercial investment increased significantly over the past decade to generate revenues and offset a decline in government funding.

"This was facilitated by significant borrowing flexibility introduced by central government in 2003 and 2011. Borrowing rules have tightened since 2020, effectively ending local authorities' property investment strictly for revenue gains."

The report ranked the top 20 English councils for high levels of debt in relation to their income.

Spelthorne borough council in Surrey topped the list with almost £1.1bn of debts worth almost 87 times its annual income.

Seven of those listed are in the same county, largely with Tory or Liberal Democrat administrations. Others include Labour-run Warrington, Cheshire, with debts in excess of £1.8bn.

Several can count current and former cabinet ministers as their local MP, including the former chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng, at Spelthorne. Surrey Heath is represented by the levelling up secretary, Michael Gove, the cabinet minister responsible for local government.

Rishi Sunak sought to capitalise on Labour-run Birmingham's financial woes last week, telling the Commons: "They've bankrupted Birmingham; we can't let them bankrupt Britain."

Moody's said many councils had made risky commercial property investments in the past decade to offset a 17.5% real-terms cut in central government funding between 2010 and 2020.

Five local authorities have issued section 114 notices since 2021.

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities said: "The government has been clear that local authorities should not take excessive risk with taxpayers' money … Local authorities have seen an increase in core spending power of up to £5.1bn or 9.4% in cash terms on 2022-23."

Top 20 English councils with high levels of debt for their size
Local authorities ranked by borrowing level versus their income

Local authority	Total borrowing	Borrowing to income ratio
1. Spelthorne	*£1.1bn*	**86.9x**
2. Woking	*£2.0bn*	**62.0**
3. Eastleigh	*£522m*	**41.1**
4. Runnymede	*£643m*	**23.4**
5. Worthing	*£204m*	**14.4**
6. Surrey Heath	*£170m*	**13.7**
7. Rushmoor	*£120m*	**10.6**
8. Cherwell	*£188m*	**10.3**
9. Uttlesford	*£302m*	**10.0**
10. Warrington	*£1.8bn*	**9.9**
11. Brentwood	*£226m*	**9.7x**
12. Mole Valley	*£103m*	**9.6**
13. East Hampshire	*£120m*	**9.5**
14. Thurrock	*£1.5bn*	**7.5**
15. Adur	*£165m*	**7.1**
16. Epsom and Ewell	*£64m*	**6.8**
17. Broxbourne	*£58m*	**6.3**
18. Guildford	*£295m*	**6.0**
19. Chorley	*£78m*	**5.9**
20. Warwick	*£268m*	**5.9**

Source: Moody's investors service

Half of working UK musicians earn less than £14k - survey

Ben Beaumont-Thomas

A pioneering survey of nearly 6,000 working musicians in the UK has found that nearly half earn less than £14,000 a year from their craft.

The first Musicians' Census, a project it is hoped will be repeated every three to five years, was created by the Musicians' Union and the charity Help Musicians, which used a series of industry partners to try to reach as many respondents as possible.

The survey found that despite high levels of education and training among professional musicians - 70% were educated to degree level or higher, and 50% have a music degree - more than half the respondents have to cobble together a living through a variety of jobs.

One respondent complained of "a real glass ceiling in terms of performance pay, with fees for most performance opportunities the same as they were 20 years ago … the hours are unsociable, rehearsals are often unpaid and there is much unpaid waiting around.

"Being a full-time musician and trying to be present as a parent is effectively impossible," they said.

Even when working in the music industry, a musician has between three and four jobs on average, and even those whose entire livelihood comes from music earn only an average of about £30,000 a year - more than £4,000 below the average median UK salary for the financial year ending 2022 (according to the Office for National Statistics) and £8,500 less than the average for someone with a bachelor's degree.

Forty-four per cent of musicians said that financial barriers were holding them back in their career, with costs of equipment and transport the most cited worries.

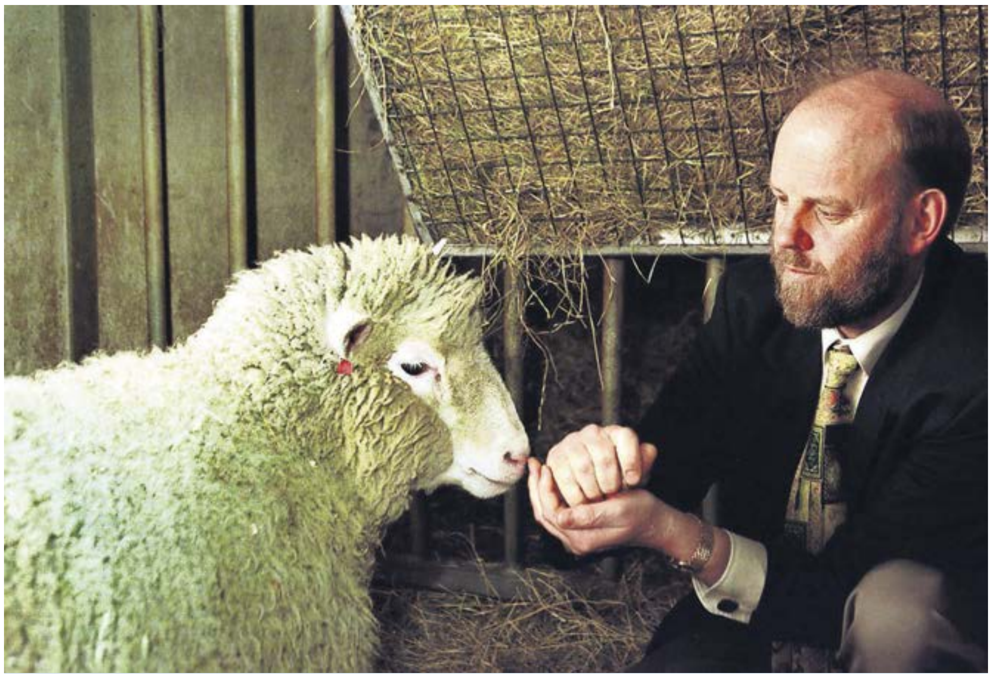
The study found a pay gap of about £1,000 between white and global majority musicians, and of £4,000 between disabled people and non-disabled people. Very few musicians who responded to the survey earned more than £70,000 - just 3% - but of those who did, four-fifths were men.

Eighty-seven per cent of respondents were white, but there were also more granular issues of racial inequality. Considerably fewer global majority musicians earned all their income from music - 32%, compared with 43% of white musicians - and at the other end of the earning scale, a third of global majority respondents earned less than 25% of their income from music, compared with a quarter of white respondents.

Issues with debt were found to disproportionately affect Black musicians and those with mental health problems - 17% of musicians reported being in debt, rising to 28% and 30% respectively for those groups.

Naomi Pohl, the general secretary of the Musicians' Union, said the data "paints a challenging landscape for musicians". Sarah Woods, the chief executive of Help Musicians, said the survey showed how " resilient our population of musicians truly is" and would be used to inform new kinds of support.

Whether owing to financial necessity or creative vigour, British musicians are certainly multi-talented: the average musician plays between two and three instruments, across four or five genres.



◀ *Prof Sir Ian Wilmut and Dolly at the University of Edinburgh's Roslin Institute in 2001*
PHOTOGRAPH: MURDO MACLEOD/THE GUARDIAN

Scientist behind cloning of Dolly the sheep dies at 79

Hannah Moore

Prof Sir Ian Wilmut, the man who led the team that created Dolly the sheep, the first mammal to be cloned from an adult cell, has died aged 79.

Wilmut led a group of scientists at the Roslin Institute at the University of Edinburgh to create the sheep, born on 5 July 1996.

"He was a titan of the scientific world," said Prof Sir Peter Mathieson, the principal and vice-chancellor of the University of Edinburgh, adding that Dolly had "transformed scientific thinking at the time".

While sheep had previously been cloned from embryonic cells, Dolly was created by combining a cell from the mammary gland of a six-year-old finn dorset sheep and an egg cell taken from a Scottish blackface sheep. The breakthrough was a career high-point for Wilmut, who had been working in the field of animal science and cryopreservation since the late 1960s. In 1973, he was part of a team at the University of Cambridge that created Frostie, the first calf to be born from a frozen embryo.

When the news of Dolly's cloning first broke in the Observer in February 1997, it sparked public debate about the ethics of cloning, including fears that the technique could be used in the future to clone humans.

Wilmut described the prospect of human cloning as "repugnant", telling the New York Times that his work "doesn't have anything to do with creating copies of human beings". Instead, he said it would enable scientists to study genetic diseases for which there was no known cure.

> *'Wilmut was a titan. Dolly transformed scientific thinking'*
>
> **Prof Peter Mathieson**
> *University of Edinburgh*

Dolly spent the rest of her life among a flock at the Roslin Institute, near Edinburgh. She was put to sleep in 2003, aged six, after suffering arthritis and lung cancer. Her body was donated to the National Museum of Scotland, in Edinburgh, where it was put on display.

Wilmut's interest in the field continued throughout his career, and he turned his attention to how stem cells could be used in regenerative medicine. In 2008, he was knighted in the new year honours list.

He retired in 2012 and revealed in 2018 that he had been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease.

Speaking to reporters on the eve of the 20th anniversary of Dolly's birth in 2016, Wilmut said that without Dolly, stem cell research would have been 20 years behind.

But he admitted he had overestimated the speed at which stem cell therapies would help patients, and said the prospect of their widespread use to treat degenerative conditions such as Parkinson's was likely to be "decades away".

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Invasive red fire ants in Italy could reach UK, study warns

Patrick Barkham

An invasive non-native ant species has become established in Italy and could rapidly spread through Europe to the UK with global heating, a new study has warned.

The red fire ant, *Solenopsis invicta*, has a powerful sting, damages crops and can infest electrical equipment including cars and computers. It is considered one of the most destructive invasive species and can rapidly form "supercolonies" that prey on invertebrates, larger vertebrates and plants, outcompeting native ants, insects and herbivores for food.

The red fire ant is the fifth most costly invasive species in the world, spreading via human trade from its native South America into Mexico, the Caribbean, Australia and the US, where it causes an estimated damage of $6bn (£4.8bn) each year.

Researchers have identified 88 red fire ant nests across 5 hectares (12 acres) near the city of Syracuse in Sicily, Italy. According to genetic analyses in a study published in Current Biology, the invasive colonies could have come from China or the US.

The charity Buglife said invasive ant species were easily spread when plants in soil were imported into Britain, and called on the government to ban the import of soil. The EU has banned the export of soil from the UK but the UK has not taken measures to stop imports, mostly via the horticultural trade.

David Smith, of Buglife, said: "We can do something to stop it arriving but once an invasive ant species is here it's going to be very hard to eradicate."

The EU has added the red fire ant to its "species of concern" list but the British government has not updated its list since Brexit, despite calls from experts.

Australia is spending A$400m (£205m) on the ant's eradication. New Zealand is the only country to have successfully eradicated the species.

In today's climate, half of the urban areas in Europe would be climatically suitable for it, including London, Paris and Rome. With global heating, Europe will become more suitable for red fire ants and help their spread.

£4.8bn

The estimated damage per year caused in the US by red fire ants, which spread from South America



Red fire ants rapidly form 'supercolonies' that prey on native species and can cause damage to crops
PHOTOGRAPH: MINDEN PICTURES/ALAMY

'Dozens of insects were swarming up my toes'

I failed to notice the ants at first. Small and pale red, they were barely visible on my sunburned feet as I bumbled around the barbecue in what I wrongly believed then to be "my" Amazonian rainforest garden. But the insects, I was about to learn, had prior ownership and they aggressively made clear I was not welcome on their territory.

At first, I felt a barely imperceptible sting, then another, and another until they had my full attention. I looked down in disbelief to see dozens of tiny insects swarming up my toes. The ants, I observed with a mixture of horror and curiosity, were stopping every few seconds to clamp down and inject venom into my flesh.

They appeared to be armed with the repeater rifle of the insect world, giving them an ability to sting multiple times in rapid succession. As more joined the attack, the buildup of alkaloid poison turned my skin blotchy and the sensation felt less and less like a pinprick and more like a burn. Fascination was now replaced by fear as I desperately trying to brush the invaders off of my legs. I had finally realised what I was dealing with: fire ants.

In the hours that followed, the area around each of the bites grew into prickling red bumps. Within a day, they were each capped with a white, fluid-filled blister. I wanted to scratch all the skin off my feet – but at the same time I was filled with admiration that something so small could create a sensation so powerful. My wife, Eliane (Ani) Brum, suggested that perhaps the lesson I should take from this was that I wear something stouter on my feet than flip-flops.

With the news that invasive red fire ants (not necessarily the subspecies that bit me) have now been found in southern Europe – with perhaps other species to follow – Ani's advice is probably the best precaution that holidaymakers can take. But I would not worry too much as long as you are not allergic, in which case there may be a risk of anaphylactic shock. Despite headlines about killer insects, the risks are manageable for most people and the bites and stings are intriguing. Even so, it may be wise not to sit on the ground in shorts unless you have scoured the area for the nests of one of the world's hardest-working creatures. **Jonathan Watts**



▼ *The then Kate Middleton with her sister Pippa carrying the 2.6m train on the Sarah Burton-designed dress*
PHOTOGRAPH: PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/GETTY



Royal designer Sarah Burton to leave role at Alexander McQueen

Chloe Mac Donnell

Sarah Burton, the creative director of Alexander McQueen and the designer of the Princess of Wales' wedding dress, is leaving the fashion house after more than two decades.

The Kering group announced yesterday that a show on 30 September in Paris Fashion Week will be Burton's final collection for the brand.

Gianfilippo Testa, the chief executive of Alexander McQueen, said: "We would like to express our immense gratitude to Sarah for writing such an important chapter in the history of the Alexander McQueen House. Sarah's contribution over the past 26 years will leave an indelible mark."

Kering said Burton's successor would be announced "in due course."

The Manchester-born designer first joined the brand in 1996 on a placement year while studying at Central Saint Martins college in London. She returned following her graduation and just two years later, in 2000, was named head of womenswear design.



Sarah Burton joined the McQueen brand in 1996

Following Alexander McQueen's death in 2010, she was named as his successor. A year later, Burton made headlines again when it was revealed she was the designer behind the Princess of Wales' wedding dress.

At the time, Clarence House said the future queen had chosen the British brand "for the beauty of its craftsmanship".

Burton described the process of creating the lace gown, complete with 8ft 8in (2.6 metre) train as "the experience of a lifetime".

In 2012, Burton was awarded an OBE for her services to the British fashion industry.

Woman held over death of girl, 2, found in village pond

Donna Ferguson

A woman has been arrested on suspicion of murder after a two-year-old girl, who was found unresponsive in a village pond in Hampshire, died in hospital.

Police called at the toddler's home in Kingsley, Hampshire, just after 5pm on Sunday, after receiving a report that she had gone missing from the property.

She was found shortly afterwards in Kingsley Pond, not far from her home on Forge Road, and taken to hospital in a serious condition.

Hampshire police said the girl died there yesterday afternoon.

The woman, who is in her 40s, has been arrested and is in custody for questioning.

"Officers are appealing for information following the death of a child who was found unresponsive at Kingsley Pond," a police spokeswoman said yesterday.

"Police were called at 5.02pm on Sunday 10 September to a report of a two-year-old girl who had gone missing from her home on Forge Road, Kingsley, Bordon.

"She was found a short time later in Kingsley Pond. She was taken to hospital in a serious condition but sadly died this afternoon. Her family are being supported by officers."

She said that officers would be in the area and members of the public should feel free to approach them if they have any concerns or information.

Anyone with information has also been urged to call 101 or contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111, or submit information online via the public portal (mipp.police.uk) under Operation Brathay.




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Missile diplomacy
Kim Jong-un en route to summit with Putin
Page 22



Soft cell
Thai ex-PM Thaksin in 'premium' hospital
Page 24



▲ *Across the 30 countries surveyed, 86% of respondents said they would prefer to live in a democratic state*
PHOTOGRAPH: TAFADZWA UFUMELI/GETTY IMAGES

'Alarming' global poll finds younger people more likely to doubt merits of democracy

Jon Henley
Europe correspondent

Democracy remains popular around the world but, faced with challenges from inequality to the climate crisis, young people are far less likely than older people to believe it can deliver on what concerns them, according to a survey published today.

Across the 30 countries surveyed, 86% of respondents would prefer to live in a democratic state and only 20% believed authoritarian regimes were more capable of achieving "what citizens want".

However, only 57% of respondents aged 18-35 felt democracy was preferable to any other form of government, against 71% of those over 56, and 42% of younger people said they were supportive of military rule, against just 20% of older respondents.

The report, titled Can Democracy Deliver? by Open Society Foundations (OSF), the civil society network funded by George Soros, also found that 35% of young people felt a "strong leader" who did not hold elections or consult parliament was "a good way to run a country".

"Our findings are both sobering and alarming," said Mark Malloch-Brown, OSF's president and a former UN deputy secretary general. "People around the world still want to believe in democracy but, generation by generation, that faith is fading as doubts grow about its ability to deliver concrete changes to their lives."

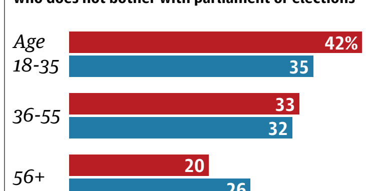
Majorities of between 85% and 95% in all regions and at every income level agreed it was wrong for governments to violate individual rights on grounds of appearance, religion, sexual or gender orientation. Respondents were most worried about poverty and inequality (20%), the climate crisis (20%) and corruption (18%). Fifty-three per cent felt their country was headed in the wrong direction and about a third said politicians were not working in their best interests.

The report concluded that democracy was falling short of its potential when 49% of respondents - from countries as different as Bangladesh and the US - said they had struggled to feed themselves at least once in the past year.

An average of 58% said they were worried political unrest in their countries could lead to violence in the next year - a fear that was highest in South Africa and Kenya (79%), Colombia (77%) and Nigeria (75%), but included two-thirds of respondents in the US and France.

Younger cohorts are more likely to support non-democratic forms of government

Global averages of respondents who believe a good way of running a country is: ● **Army rule** ● **A leader who does not bother with parliament or elections**



Source: Open Society Foundations survey of 36,344 respondents in 30 countries, 18 May to 21 July 2023. Terminology of 'parliament' was adapted to respondents' country context

Insecurity was another concern, with 42% of people, including significant majorities across Latin America - 74% in Brazil, 73% in Argentina, 65% in Colombia and 60% in Mexico - saying they did not feel laws in their country kept people like them safe.

Of more than 36,000 people surveyed, about 70% said they were worried that the climate emergency would affect them and their livelihoods in the coming year, with those in Bangladesh (90%), Turkey (85%), Kenya (83%) and India (82%) the most concerned, and in China (45%), Russia (48%) and the UK (54%) the least.

The climate crisis was viewed as the most significant challenge facing the world by 32% of people in India and Italy, followed by Germany (28%), Egypt (27%), Mexico (27%), France (25%), and Bangladesh (25%).

At a national level, however, corruption was the chief worry, with an average of 23% saying it was the top issue facing their country - ranging from 6% in Germany and 7% in France and the UK to 45% in Ghana, 44% in Nigeria and 37% in Colombia.

Of issues most directly affecting people personally, poverty and inequality ranked highest - including in Senegal, the smallest economy surveyed, and the US, the largest - with an average score of about 21%.

EU worried about official held in Iran for 513 days

Lisa O'Carroll
Brussels

The European Commission has said it is "very worried" about the plight of a Swedish EU official who has spent more than 500 days in jail in Iran.

Ylva Johansson, the home affairs commissioner, who was previously in charge of the work of the detained Johan Floderus, said every effort was being made to have him released, as she spoke publicly yesterday for the first time since the veil of secrecy about his case was lifted.

"I'm very sad. I'm very worried. And this has been with me for such a long time now," she said.

Floderus was jailed in Iran 513 days ago but the identity of the EU official, who turned 33 in prison on Sunday, came to light only 10 days ago after a report in the New York Times.

Until then his identity had been kept secret by Sweden and the EU on the grounds that quiet diplomacy was the best route to obtaining his release.

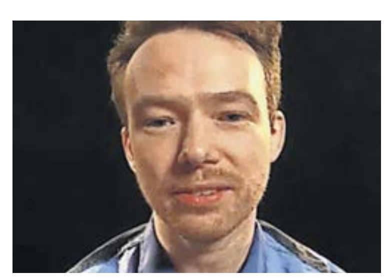
Over the weekend, Floderus's family also broke their silence, urging the international community to help secure his release, and complaining that he had been forced to go on hunger strikes to get telephone calls.

The family also revealed that Floderus's first consular meeting was not permitted until five months into his incarceration.

They said the conditions he was living under, including 24-hour lighting in his cell, were "in violation of the UN-standard minimum rules for treatment of prisoners". Floderus had spent more than 300 days in solitary confinement, "in blatant disregard of international guidelines".

Johansson said Floderus had been on her team for two years but that he had moved to another because he had wanted to work for the EU delegation in Afghanistan.

He was detained in April 2022 while travelling in a personal capacity with friends. "He was a very bright, very warm and an excellent person to work with. And of course, when you work close you also become friends," said Johansson.



▲ *Johan Floderus was detained in 2022 while travelling with friends*

Eyewitness


VISIT CHARGERS.COM/MESSAGE
SUNDAY TICKET
DEFENSE
20
24
Q3 2:24
LAST PLAY
(5:53) (SHOTGUN) 1-T.TAGOVAILOA PASS SHORT MIDDLE TO 17-J.WADDLE TO LAC 24 FOR 13 YARDS (32-A.GILMAN; 0-E.KENDRICKS).
2ND
LAC 37
PECHANGA RESORT CASINO
PECHANGA RESORT CASINO
LOS ANGELES CHARGERS
#BOLTUP

▼ **Inglewood, California**
The LA Chargers' JK Scott punts the ball in a game against the Miami Dolphins at SoFi Stadium on Sunday
PHOTOGRAPH: KIRBY LEE/USA TODAY SPORTS



North Korean leader Kim on his way to Russia by armoured train to meet Putin

Pjotr Sauer

The North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, will visit Russia in the coming days at the invitation of Vladimir Putin, the Kremlin has confirmed, amid concerns in the west that Pyongyang plans to provide weapons for Moscow to use in the war against Ukraine.

An armoured train carrying Kim was reported by South Korean media to have departed Pyongyang for Russia via North Korea's north-eastern border, with a meeting expected to be held in the Russian port city of Vladivostok as early as today.

"At the invitation of Russian president, Vladimir Putin, the chairman of state affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Kim Jong-un, will pay an official visit to the Russian Federation in the coming days," the Kremlin said. The North Korean state news agency KCNA said the two would "meet and have a talk", without elaborating.

The trip marks Kim's first visit abroad in more than four years and the first since the Covid-19 pandemic.

Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said Putin would host a state lunch for Kim and the two would meet "one on one if necessary." He said: "We seek to build good, mutually beneficial relations with North Korea."

Pentagon spokesperson Brig Gen Pat Ryder said: "We do expect some type of meeting [and] based on the information we've been provided, [Kim] is travelling to Russia," .

The White House said last week it had intelligence that showed Russia was looking to purchase additional artillery shells from North Korea to shore up its defence industrial base.

The US national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, told reporters North Korea "will pay a price" for supplying Russia with weapons to use in Ukraine. North Korea has previously been accused by the US of selling artillery shells to the Russian mercenary group Wagner.

The US, Britain, South Korea and Japan have said any arms deal between North Korea and Russia would violate UN resolutions.

The meeting between the two leaders could take place at the Eastern Economic Forum, an annual conference on the campus of the Far Eastern Federal University in Vladivostok. The Kremlin said yesterday that Putin had arrived in the city for a two-day visit to the forum.



▲ *A train resembling one used by Kim on the Russian border yesterday*

In July, Russia's defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, travelled to Pyongyang, where he toured a defence exhibition that featured the country's banned ballistic missiles.

Analysts believe North Korea has an extensive supply of artillery shells, rockets and small arms ammunition that could help Russia replenish the stocks it has expended in more than 18 months of war in Ukraine.

In return, Moscow could share its advanced technology for satellites and nuclear-powered submarines.

'Our nation didn't learn' The Russian man who lays WWII dead to rest

Pjotr Sauer

Konstantin Dobrovolski was out in the woods like he was most days in early autumn before the inevitable advance of Arctic winter.

Armed with little more than a map, a shovel and an old metal detector, Dobrovolski has scoured the hostile landscape of Russia's far north for the last 33 years in search of the long-forgotten remains of Soviet second world war soldiers.

"Just today we found the remains of five soldiers, some bones and old medals," he said during a research trip outside the Arctic town of Murmansk. "We have to hurry before the ground freezes again."

With a small team of committed volunteers, Dobrovolski, 70, has dedicated his life to finding, identifying and reburying the remains of more than 100,000 Soviet troops who are believed to have died on the very northern part of the Soviet defence line.

"When we started our work in the early 80s, there were more bodies than mushrooms. We have found the remains of 20,000 soldiers," Dobrovolski said.

These days, death is on his mind more than ever. "Every day I am confronted with the grim consequences of war. But it seems like our nation didn't learn the right lesson from history," he said. The Soviet victory over Nazi Germany has gradually become the centrepiece of Vladimir Putin's concept of Russian identity over his two decades in charge. Almost every family had some connection to the war, in which the Soviet sacrifice was unimaginably huge.





◀ *Konstantin Dobrovolski has spent 33 years trying to find and rebury the 100,000 Soviet troops thought to have died on the northern defence line*
PHOTOGRAPH: NO.MEDIA RUSSIA/ YOUTUBE

▲ *Soviet soldiers display trophies after fighting near Murmansk in the far north-west of Russia. Vladimir Putin evoked memories of second world war to justify the invasion of Ukraine*

> ***'I will travel to Bakhmut myself, go on my knees and apologise to the Ukrainian people'***
>
> **Konstantin Dobrovolski**
> *Investigator*

When Russia invaded Ukraine, Putin tapped into the memory, language and imagery of the past war to justify the attack, telling his nation that men were "fighting for the same thing as their fathers and grandfathers" and framing Ukraine as a successor to Nazi Germany.

"Absolute nonsense," said Dobrovolski. "These two wars are completely different. Our fathers and grandfathers were heroically defending our country, not invading another one. Our borders were drawn in 1991. What the hell are we doing in Ukraine? It's madness and it needs to stop."

Soon after the invasion began last year, a slogan popped up on the streets of Moscow to boost support for the war: "We don't leave ours behind."

Dobrovolski said: "I look around and see all these bodies and then see these pseudo-patriots screaming that no one is left behind. They should spend a day with me here in the field and look at these forgotten soldiers. How can they talk about patriotism when we haven't even buried our defenders properly?"

He said he was shocked but not entirely surprised by the apparent support the invasion had enjoyed among his compatriots. "We were being fed for a while that war and death is a noble, beautiful thing. There is a lot of hate in society," Dobrovolski said.

For years, he grudgingly watched how the Kremlin transformed the Victory Day celebrations on 9 May into a bombastic show of modern military might.

Pointing to the sinister slogan "We can do it again", which has gained popularity on Victory Day in recent years, he said his country "appeared to have forgotten that war is a tragedy, it's pain and suffering". For Dobrovolski, the war in Ukraine was also personal.

Last spring he had to bury his son who died fighting near Bakhmut.

Sergei had signed up with the Wagner group from prison, where he was promised freedom in return for a six-month stint in Ukraine. "I tried to do everything to stop him from going, I told him: 'What are you doing, son? It's a one-way ticket'. But I failed," Dobrovolski said. He recognised his son in drone footage posted by the Ukrainian army on social media.

"I don't know if he killed Ukrainians or not. As a father, it was my duty to bury him, but I judge his decision," he said, audibly emotional. "When the fighting is over, I will travel to Bakhmut myself, go on my knees and apologise to the Ukrainian people."

In a country where dissent is criminalised, Dobrovolski is a rare voice that pushes against the state narrative. He is not shy of his views, having previously told his story in a haunting documentary produced by the Novaya Gazeta paper.

"I am not scared, no," he said. "My conscience is clean and that is the most important thing to me."

For now, he plans to continue his work. Next month, his volunteers will bury the remains of soldiers that they unearthed this year at the Valley Glory, a military cemetery close to Murmansk, also known among soldiers as "Death Valley".

"We won't be able to bury everyone. Too much time has passed and some remains are destroyed for ever," he said. "Unfortunately there will be a lot of more burying to do for generations to come."

Palestinian figures condemn Abbas's antisemitic remarks as 'reprehensible'

Bethan McKernan
Jerusalem

Dozens of Palestinian intellectuals, artists and other public figures have published an open letter condemning antisemitic comments made by the Palestinian Authority president, Mahmoud Abbas.

In a letter published on Sunday, 96 people, including the historian Rashid Khalidi, the political scientist Dana el-Kurd and the businessman Sam Bahour, said they "unequivocally condemn the morally and politically reprehensible comments" made by Abbas. "We adamantly reject any attempt to diminish, misrepresent, or justify antisemitism, Nazi crimes against humanity, or historical revisionism vis-a-vis the Holocaust," the letter said.

In a televised speech to fellow members of Fatah, the occupied West Bank's ruling political party, Abbas, 87, said: "They say that Hitler killed the Jews for being Jews and that Europe hated the Jews because they were Jews.

"No. It was clearly explained that they fought them because of their social role and not their religion."

Abbas later clarified that he was referring to "usury, money and so on". The comments, made last month, caused international uproar after they were translated into English and published last Wednesday by the Middle East Media Research Institute, a pro-Israel press monitoring organisation based in the US.

Abbas's remarks were criticised by the US, Germany and the EU, which accused him of distorting history and promoting antisemitic stereotypes. Anne Hidalgo, the mayor of Paris, stripped him of the city's highest honour. Although he is viewed internationally as a major architect of the Oslo peace process in the 1990s and was an early Fatah advocate for dialogue with the Israelis, Abbas has been accused of antisemitism on numerous occasions.

In the 1980s, while living in Moscow, Abbas wrote a thesis claiming that Zionists collaborated with the Nazis during the Holocaust, which he has since distanced himself from.

In May this year, Abbas suggested parallels between Israel and Nazi Germany. Last year, he caused outrage by claiming Israel had carried out "50 Holocausts" against the Palestinians during a news conference with the German chancellor, Olaf Scholz.

Abbas's spokesperson, Nabil Abu Rudeineh, has condemned the "rabid campaign" against the Palestinian president, saying his position is "clear and documented, which is the complete condemnation of the Holocaust and the rejection of antisemitism".

Abbas, who was elected in 2005, is deeply unpopular at home. His Palestinian Authority is accused of violently suppressing its critics, widespread corruption and collaborating with the Israeli security services against its own people.

Since his Islamist political rivals, Hamas, seized control of Gaza in 2007 he has repeatedly refused to hold elections.

"The Palestinian people are sufficiently burdened by Israeli settler colonialism, dispossession, occupation, and oppression without having to bear the negative effect of such ignorant and profoundly antisemitic narratives perpetuated by those who claim to speak in our name," the letter said.

"Abbas and his political entourage have forfeited any claim to represent the Palestinian people and our struggle for justice, freedom, and equality, a struggle that stands against all forms of systemic racism and oppression."

Relief at last for Phoenix as record heatwave comes to end

Maya Yang



PHOTOGRAPH: MARIO TAMA/GETTY IMAGES

A record-breaking heatwave during which temperatures in Phoenix, Arizona, reached 43C (110F) on 54 days this year looks set to abate, much to the relief of residents.

The blistering weather appears to have peaked with a temperature of 44.4C on Sunday.

The US National Weather Service (NWS) said temperatures in Arizona's largest city would begin to retreat "closer to the seasonal normal" this week with highs expected to range between 38.9C and 40C.

Sunday's high temperature broke the record of 43.9C for the date set in 1990.

Weather service forecasters also said there was a 25% chance of rain mainly over higher ground yesterday.

On Saturday, Phoenix's Sky Harbor international airport reached 43C, making it the 54th day this year to hit that temperature and breaking the previous record set in 2020.

From 1991 to 2020, the average number of days at 43C or above was 21, the NWS said. An excessive heat warning issued across south-central and south-west Arizona was set to expire at 8pm yesterday.

"I hate to say this will be the last, but it's more than likely that will be the case. This will be our last stretch of 110s this summer," Chris Kuhlman, a meteorologist with the NWS in Phoenix, told the Associated Press. According to the NWS, with the onset of cooler temperatures and the chance of rain returning, the threat of heat risk will decrease from moderate to minor.

This summer Phoenix baked during 31 consecutive days of temperatures at or above 43C as a blistering heatwave swept across states in the south-western US including Arizona, Texas, New Mexico and California.

The previous record was set in 1974, during which the city experienced 18 days at or above 43C.

The summer of 2023 was the hottest ever recorded globally, according to the EU's Copernicus Climate Change Service. The average temperature was measured to be 16.8C, which was 0.66C above the 1991 to 2020 average.



▲ *A thermal image shows a surface temperature of 65C (150F) on a road in downtown Phoenix. Top, heat shimmers off another street in the city, which experienced 31 consecutive days over 43C* PHOTOGRAPH: CARLOS BARRÍA/REUTERS

In brief

Greece

Minister resigns after ferry passenger's death

Greece's shipping minister, Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, has resigned over comments about the death of a ferry passenger who was allegedly pushed into the sea. A video showed Antonis Kargiotis, 36, running on to the loading ramp of the ferry in Athens last Tuesday and crew members pushing him back three times before he fell into the sea. Varvitsiotis had caused outrage by saying: "There are those who mourn the victim and those who mourn the people who work for a wage … and are now accused of murder." The ferry captain and three crew members face criminal charges. AFP *Athens*

India

Trudeau left stranded in Delhi by aircraft fault

Canada's prime minister, Justin Trudeau, and his delegation were forced to extend their stay in Delhi for the G20 summit after his plane broke down, officials confirmed.

Trudeau, who arrived in India on Friday, was due to leave on Sunday after laying a wreath at a memorial to the Indian independence leader Mahatma Gandhi, but an aircraft fault kept him in India overnight.

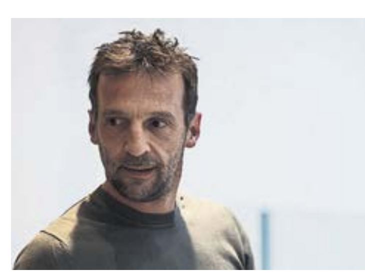
His office said the Canadian air force, which operates the plane, had notified the delegation of technical difficulties. "Our delegation will be staying in India until alternative arrangements are made," it added. AFP *Delhi*

France

Actor 'trying to impress daughter' before crash

The French actor and director Mathieu Kassovitz has said he was trying to impress his daughter when he had a motorbike accident that caused serious leg injuries. Kassovitz, pictured, known for his 1995 film La Haine, crashed into a guardrail on a training course while his daughter was on a motorbike behind him with an instructor.

In an Instagram post, he said: "I'm 56 years old, perhaps it's time I stop being a dickhead and realise there are people who love me." He said doctors had told him part of his leg might need to be amputated but surgeons had managed to save it. Kim Willsher *Paris*



TV, fridge, aircon: jailed ex-PM is spared harsh realities of Thai prisons

Rebecca Ratcliffe
Bangkok

When Thailand's former leader Thaksin Shinawatra returned from exile in August, he became arguably the most high-profile person to have been held in the country's notorious prisons. But the billionaire businessman, who was jailed over corruption-related charges, was inside for little more than 12 hours before he was moved to the premium ward of a hospital in Bangkok.

The episode has prompted claims of special treatment and raised a series of wider questions about standards within the prison system.

According to reports in the Thai media, Thaksin was moved to the wing of a hospital with private, air-conditioned rooms with a TV, fridge, sofa and dining table, while under 24-hour care by nurses. The exact contents of his room are unclear.

Officials have denied he has been the recipient of any special treatment, saying the former prime minister needed urgent care as he was experiencing insomnia, chest tightness and high blood pressure and the oxygen levels in his fingertips were low.

However, activists and lawyers have pointed to conditions inside Thailand's jails, where cells are overcrowded and lacking in hygiene, and medical care is limited. They say the same standard of care should be afforded to all prisoners.

In the Bangkok Post, Andrea Giorgetta of the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) wrote: "One positive aspect of the Thaksin saga is that it has put a spotlight on the often-overlooked issue of prison conditions in Thailand."

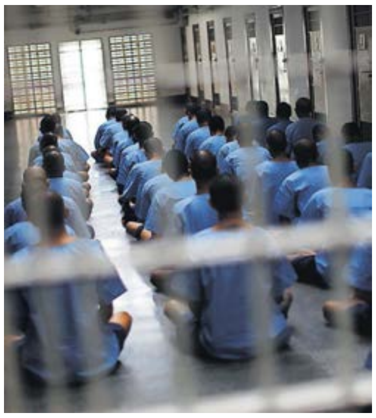
The FIDH's annual report on the state of jails noted that while the prison population was falling, jails remained overstretched and had been repeatedly criticised for falling below international standards.

Access to shower facilities is often limited; in one facility, inmates are allowed to stand under a shower for a count of 15. In the centre of a cell there are typically one to three squat toilets, with a tub of water and a bowl used for flushing and cleaning - but often such water has run out, the FIDH report found. Cells can be shared by as many as 50 or 60 people, according to the group Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR).

Political prisoners represented by TLHR have, like others, reported a lack of nutritious food and clean drinking water. Prison water has a strong smell of chlorine, inmates say, with some reporting seeing mosquito larvae. If inmates want to buy bottled water or food, they must work in the prison or rely on family to send items.



◀ *Supporters of Thaksin Shinawatra await the former PM's release from prison in Bangkok last month*
PHOTOGRAPH: MANAN VATSYAYANA/AFP/GETTY


▲ *Inmates in Klong Prem prison, where Thaksin was briefly held*

Activists and lawyers say when prisoners do become ill, accessing medical care is a drawn-out process.

"There may be certain facts or circumstances in Mr Thaksin's case that required such expedited procedure," Poonsuk Poonsukcharoen, a lawyer at TLHR, said of Thaksin's overnight transfer. "But from our experiences in working with other prisoners, that's an unusually quick timeframe."

After Thaksin's move to hospital, the hashtag VVIP began trending and footage of him in exile - including a 2021 clip of him energetically boxing - was shared on social media, as people raised questions about his condition.

His daughter Paetongtarn Shinawatra has said she is worried about his heart, and that he had lung problems after contracting Covid.

Still, some have now speculated that he could spend the remainder of his sentence - which has been reduced by a royal pardon from eight years to one year - in hospital.

Poonsuk said that if Thaksin was ill, TLHR had no complaints about his treatment but added: "We would hope that other prisoners would be afforded the same standard as well."

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▼ *Soldiers of the UN peacekeeping force Minusma, which was ordered to withdraw from Mali in June*
PHOTOGRAPH: SOULEYMANE AG ANARA/AFP/GETTY



'No one to keep us safe' Malians flee villages amid rise in terrorist attacks

Jason Burke
International security correspondent

There was no warning. The raiders came late in the night, shouting and shooting. The unarmed farmers of Bujo had no chance to defend themselves, and those who were too slow to flee died. By the morning, the villagers' homes had been burned, livestock stolen and stores looted. They buried 17 victims in the communal graveyard and then walked nine miles to the nearby town of Bandiagara, where they remain.

The attack in mid-August was one of more than a dozen assaults last month on similar villages in a small area of central Mali that have killed at least 100 people and displaced tens of thousands.

"We are really completely lost. We need food, shelter, everything. We want to go home to our village but there is no one to keep us safe there," said Wilas Bujo, a 59-year-old farmer who fled with 13 family members to Bandiagara.

Last week, the threat to civilians in Mali was underlined by an attack on a passenger boat on the Niger River by al-Qaida affiliated militants from the Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM) group. About 50 people died after three rockets were fired into the vessel in northern Mali. A government military base was attacked at the same time and 15 soldiers were killed.

Mali is one of the countries most affected by extremism in the central Sahel, which is the global centre of terrorism, according to recent figures compiled by the Institute for Economics and Peace thinktank.

In 2022, terrorism deaths around the world decreased by 9% to 6,701, after remaining steady for four years, but the toll in Mali rose to 944, a 56% increase. Most of the victims were civilians.

Analysts have said a series of complex social, economic, environmental and political crises underlie the rise in violence. One cause is the 2021 coup d'etat in which a military regime ousted a democratically elected leader. Mali's new regime then forced out a substantial and unpopular French force and hired the Kremlin-linked Wagner group, which deployed about 1,000 mercenary fighters.

In June, Mali's new rulers demanded the withdrawal of Minusma, a 13,000-strong UN peacekeeping force set up in 2013. The attacks on Bujo and other villages near Bandiagara in August began days after the UN force left.

Similar attacks have been seen in northern Mali, too, after the UN pullout there. The city of Timbuktu has been blockaded by emboldened militants and there have been clashes in the town of Ber. A 2015 peace deal that ended a rebellion by some Tuareg communities is under threat, analysts said.

"The peace deal is hanging by a thread. With the absence of UN peacekeepers or a state presence, the collapse of the peace deal may provide safe havens for militant groups to expand their control across northern and central Mali," said Mucahid Durmaz, a senior analyst at the risk intelligence company Verisk Maplecroft. "An uptick in violence could potentially cause a new wave of refugees who face high levels of insecurity."

There has been no claim of responsibility for the attacks around Bandiagara. Witnesses said their assailants shouted "Allahu Akbar", which suggests at least some were Islamist militants, and the tactics resemble those used by such extremists elsewhere in Mali. The villagers did not recognise any of the languages spoken by the attackers, and believe they came from some distance away.



▲ *Malians with an image of coup leader Col Assimi Goïta and a Russian flag during a demonstration in Bamako in May 2021* PHOTOGRAPH: AMADOU KEITA/REUTERS

One reason for the increase in violence may be the bitter rivalry between two big Islamist extremist organisations - the al-Qaida linked JNIM and Islamic State in the Greater Sahara (ISGS) - which are both trying to extend their territorial control.

Control over communities is essential to extremist groups seeking recruits and funds. According to a UN expert report last month, JNIM collects money and other resources "from almost all communities in the north of Mali and elsewhere", arguing it needs to defend them against Islamic State.

Islamist extremists also levy taxes on livestock and truck traffic as well as Mali's extensive artisanal gold-mining industry. Some have profited too from the trafficking of fuel, narcotics, cigarettes and other contraband across the Sahara. Ransom payments are another source of revenue. Hundreds of Malians have also been abducted.

Villagers in Mali frequently find themselves caught between armed insurgent groups and government forces. Successive offensives have implicated the Malian army and Wagner mercenaries in bloody massacres, torture and indiscriminate detentions.

"We don't want to be accused of being collaborators by the armed groups or by the army or the Russians," said one village elder in Bandiagara.

Local observers said some of the villages around Bandiagara that had suffered recent attacks had concluded informal agreements with roaming extremist groups that should have kept them safe. These were ignored by the extremists after village elders refused either to pass on local intelligence about the movements of government troops or to supply dozens of young men to serve as fighters.

"When the jihadists turn up and find that all the sons have gone, then they think the leaders are playing a trick and punish them," another elder said.

Analysts pointed to political unrest, poor governance, unemployment, corruption and lack of reliable information among the many factors aggravating insecurity and extremism in the Sahel. The climate crisis has also played a part, exacerbating conflict over scant resources.

In Bandiagara, people have mobilised to help those who have been displaced. But the food, bedding and other resources they can share are inadequate. The town was short of water even before the new arrivals trebled its population.

Daniel Kené, who fled the village of Jomollo Kanda, 7 miles away, said many displaced villagers were staying with relatives or were sleeping in tents, schools or in the open despite lashing rain.

"We really need some help to get back home. We are farmers not townspeople, and it's a time when we need to be in our fields if we are going to have a harvest in a few months," Kené said. "Every time we think things are going to get better, something else happens … We are beginning to lose hope."

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Business



◀ *The business secretary, Kemi Badenoch, with the new electric Mini Cooper at the factory in Oxford yesterday*
PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW BOYERS/ REUTERS

BMW to save electric Mini plant in Oxford with £600m upgrade

Jasper Jolly
Kalyeena Makortoff

BMW is to spend £600m to upgrade its Mini factory in Oxford for the production of electric vehicles in a U-turn that will provide a boost to the UK car industry.

The Mini plant in Cowley will begin production of the next-generation electric Mini Cooper and the new Mini Aceman SUV from 2026, lifting a threat to the future of the model after the government agreed to provide about £75m in subsidies.

The German carmaker, which has owned Mini since 2000, had decided last year to move production of the electric version to China in a move that provoked dismay in the UK industry – particularly in a brand so determinedly British to the point of offering an option with union jack tail-lights. The factory has been making electric Minis since 2019.

Carmakers are gradually shifting production towards electric cars before curbs on petrol and diesel sales, such as the UK's 2035 ban. Shifting to zero emissions vehicles, which in practice mostly means electric cars, is seen as a crucial part of cutting carbon emissions to net zero.

The move will secure 4,000 jobs at Oxford and Swindon, where BMW makes body panels, and was lauded by ministers, including the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, who said: "BMW's investment is a huge vote of confidence in this country as a global leader in electric vehicles."

> *'BMW's investment is a huge vote of confidence in the UK as a global leader in electric vehicles'*
>
> **Jeremy Hunt**
> *Chancellor*

Carmakers have pushed governments around the world for subsidies to make the shift to electric technology, and have regularly considered moving production to cheaper countries such as China. Milan Nedeljković, the BMW head of production, said there had been genuine doubts over the future of the Oxford plant. "It was a real tipping point," he added. "There is a certain element of heritage, of feeling, being part of the society here, but at the same time we must come with a profitable business case. To get this business case right for Oxford was a very difficult challenge."

BMW's move represents the latest upturn for Britain's electric vehicle industry, which faced uncertainty with battery supplies and post-Brexit tariffs, as well as chip shortages after the pandemic turmoil hit UK factories particularly hard.

The investment in the Mini factory means most high-volume car factories in the UK have a confirmed future in the electric era, though there is still a question mark beyond 2035 over Toyota's factory in Burnaston, Derbyshire, which makes hybrid cars.

BMW said the move meant its cumulative investment in factories in Oxford, Swindon and Hams Hall in the West Midands, where it produces petrol engines, had reached £3bn.

The announcement came even though there remains uncertainty over whether UK-made electric cars will be subject to EU tariffs, and vice versa, from 1 January because of rules that require batteries to be sourced from the UK or the EU.

Germany's economy forecast to shrink amid eurozone slowdown

Larry Elliott
Economics editor

Germany's economy will shrink this year as part of a wider eurozone slowdown triggered by higher inflation and the dampening impact of rising interest rates, the European Commission has said.

In its interim quarterly update, it said Europe's powerhouse economy would be the worst-affected major country in the 20-nation single currency bloc and would record a 0.4% contraction in 2023.

Three months ago, the commission was forecasting that Germany would grow by 0.2% this year, but now it says the world's fourth biggest economy has been even more sorely affected by weaker consumer spending than it had envisaged.

While the growth prospects of France and Spain have improved modestly since the spring, the commission said the eurozone economy overall was now expected to expand by 0.8% in 2023, down from 1.1% previously. Growth in 2024 has been revised down from 1.6% to 1.3%.

The downbeat forecasts increase the chances of the European Central Bank calling a halt to the steady tightening of policy that has resulted in its key interest rate rising from -0.5% to 3.75% in nine successive jumps.

Growth in the 27-country EU for 2023 has also been revised down, from 1% to 0.8%, while inflationary pressure across Europe has eased slightly.

"Latest data confirms that economic activity in the EU was subdued in the first half of 2023 on the back of the formidable shocks that the EU has endured," the commission said.

"Weakness in domestic demand, in particular consumption, shows that high and still increasing consumer prices for most goods and services are taking a heavier toll than expected in the spring forecast."

The commission said the sharp slowdown in the provision of bank credit showed higher interest rates were working their way through the economy. Survey indicators pointed to slowing economic activity in the summer and the months ahead.

John Lewis boss calls for plan to revive high streets

Mark Sweney

The boss of John Lewis has called for a royal commission review into the UK's ailing high streets, arguing that mass store closures, crime and antisocial behaviour are blighting Britain's town centres.

Dame Sharon White, the chair of John Lewis Partnership, which owns John Lewis and Waitrose, said 6,000 shops in Britain had closed over the last five years and a rethink was needed to make town centres "once more welcoming places where people want to live, work and spend time".

"Too many towns and cities are shells of their former selves," White wrote in the Telegraph yesterday. "Boarded-up shops left vacant, dwindling numbers of banks and post offices. And in their place seemingly endless rows of vaping and charity shops." White, who acknowledged the John Lewis Partnership had also closed stores and supermarkets, said high streets "risk becoming a looting ground for emboldened shoplifters and organised gangs".

In Britain, shop thefts have more than doubled in the past six years, reaching 8m last year, while last month police called on TikTok to investigate a "robbery" campaign on London's Oxford Street supposedly orchestrated on the social media site.

White said retailers have had to increase security, introduce bodycams and install more CCTV. "I want to see the Scottish legislation that makes the abuse of a retail worker an offence brought in UK-wide," she said. "We now need a new royal commission to set a course to revitalise our high streets. Planning, taxation, crime, environmental policy, housing and transport all play their role, but must be considered as a whole."

White said that an independently run public inquiry would need to look at the need for council planning to take account of post-Covid working changes, "unfair" business rates and the impact of the government scrapping VAT-free shopping for tourists two years ago.



▲ *Sharon White said high streets are now 'shells of their former selves'*

Business view
Nils Pratley



BMW's boost is welcome but UK car industry needs to lure new players if it is to join the fast lane

'BMW's investment is a huge vote of confidence in this country as a global leader in electric vehicles," said Jeremy Hunt, as the German car company backed the production of electric Minis in Oxford. A touch of political hyperbole is understandable since the plant would have been a very bad one for the UK to lose, but the chancellor is overdoing things.

It is obviously welcome news that about 4,000 jobs will be saved in Oxford and Swindon, where the panels are made. And, by recent yardsticks of taxpayer subsidy, the reported £75m contribution to the overall £600m investment almost counts as modest. It's just that the chancellor's claim that UK car manufacturing is now "motoring" requires context.

The point about BMW and Oxford is that the UK is playing a defensive game of protecting what we already have. Roughly the same is true about the commitment from Tata to invest in a gigafactory in the UK, thereby securing the largest part by value of the supply chain for Jaguar Land Rover's switch into electric production in the UK. Stellantis's production of electric vehicles at its factory in Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, after a £100m investment, falls into the same "saved" bracket.

What's missing from the story so far is the arrival of new names in UK car manufacturing.



▲ *BMW's Mini factory at Cowley in Oxford. The plant would have been a very bad one for the UK to lose*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOE GIDDENS/PA WIRE

Data from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) shows UK car production peaked in 2017, when 1.7m units were made. The decline thereafter came with the Brexit vote, the perhaps related departure of Honda from Swindon, the pandemic, chip shortages, the rise in the cost of energy and plain old competition. A recent upward tick represents a recovery - but it's a recovery from the lowest volume output since the 1950s.

The SMMT's latest forecast foresees 860,000 units this year, a year-on-year rise of 11%, and "the possibility" to get production back to 1m in 2028. That medium-term forecast indeed looks plausible because the main blocks now look reasonably secure: 400,000 cars, say, from Nissan in Sunderland; 200,000 Minis in Oxford; plus JLR reaching a combined 300,000 from Halewood and Solihull. But remember that as recently as 2015 the SMMT was talking about the possibility of reaching 2m by 2020.

The open question is whether the non-departure of the likes of BMW's Minis, and Tata's morale-boosting gigafactory (complete with estimated £500m subsidy), will breed confidence and pull in a few newer players in the electric market. On that score, it's hard to detect signs of optimism yet.

Back in July, BYD, the large Chinese manufacturer hoping to sell 800,000 cars annually in Europe by 2030, said the UK wasn't even on its longlist of locations for its first European electric plant; it blamed Brexit, much as Tesla did in 2019.

Meanwhile, the post-Brexit "rules of origin" legislation, which dictates the content by value of a vehicle that must be sourced in the UK or EU to avoid 10% tariffs, continues to sit as an uncertainty over the industry. Some form of EU-UK fudge to move next year's "cliff edge" to 2027 is still the way to bet, but it hasn't happened yet.

None of which alters the fact that the newsflow from the UK car industry is vastly improved from a year ago, when the losing bet that was Britishvolt was causing general gloom. Subsidies for JLR and BMW look a much better use of public money, even if the Oxford facility will be sourcing its batteries from Germany or China. Just don't mistake stability for the fast lane.

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Comfort Eating with Grace Dent: Live

Guardian restaurant critic and Comfort Eating podcast host, Grace Dent is going live. Katy Wix and Jimi Famurewa will be interviewing Grace in London and Manchester respectively.

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Have we hit peak China?

How booming middle class struck a brick wall

Amy Hawkins
Senior China correspondent

Holding her newborn daughter, Lynne, 33, feels apprehensive about the future. Her elder son, though adorable, is already draining the family coffers and he has not even begun to go to proper school yet.

His private kindergarten in Beijing costs 80,000 yuan (£8,700) a year. Extracurricular classes, including 10 hours a week of English, sport, painting and online tutorials, cost another 60,000 yuan. She already knows that his five-month-old sister won't be getting the same resources.

"I don't have the energy to *jiwa* again," she says, using a Mandarin term for helicopter parenting. She longs for her home town of Xingtai, a small city in Hebei province, where school fees are a fraction of what they are in the Chinese capital, and where life is "peaceful and relaxed and happy". "It's really hard in Beijing," she says.

Like tens of millions of other wealthy urbanites in China, Lynne has ridden the wave of an economic boom that has transformed China from a poor, largely rural country into the world's second-largest economy.

When she was born in 1990, nearly 70% of China's population lived in extreme poverty, according to the World Bank. Now that share is virtually zero (although many people are still very poor).

When China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001, western pundits predicted that greater economic engagement with western nations would lead to political liberalisation, while in China, leaders promised the opposite: as long as ordinary Chinese stayed out of politics, the state would deliver riches.

Both of those predictions have failed to materialise.

A Covid-battered economy – tainted by slowing demand and a deepening crisis in the property market – coupled with an ageing population, an increasingly strained business environment and growing tensions with the west, have left many experts asking whether China's unstoppable rise is already petering out.

Since Xi Jinping came to power in 2012, Beijing has clamped down on dissent at home and taken a bullish stance on the world stage. Now the central bargain between the state and middle class has shifted to an offer based on security rather than prosperity.

However, that's not necessarily what China's middle class – which has ballooned in the 21st century – signed up for.

Definitions of what constitutes the middle class vary, but according to the Washington-based Pew Research Center, the proportion of China's population in the middle income group grew from 3.1% in 2000 to just over 50% in 2018. By the end of this decade, another 80 million people will join their ranks, predicts the Boston Consulting Group. But although living standards are improving for many people, social mobility is stalling.

3.1%

Proportion of Chinese people who were in the middle income group in 2000. By 2018 it had passed 50%



A shuttered shopping centre in Chongqing





▲ *The extravagant exterior of Louis Vuitton's main store in Shanghai, in contrast with the lives of food delivery couriers in Beijing, left. Living standards are improving for many, but social mobility is stalling*

PHOTOGRAPHS: CFOTO/FUTURE PUBLISHING/GETTY; BLOOMBERG/GETTY

The number of Chinese people living in extreme poverty has dropped to nearly zero over the last four decades

Percentage living in extreme poverty



Source: World Bank. Note: Extreme poverty defined as living below US$2.15 (£1.70) per day based on 2017 prices (purchasing-power parity)

'I haven't the energy to [be a helicopter parent] again. It's really hard in Beijing'

Lynne
Middle-class Beijinger

Children born in the bottom 20% of society in the 1980s are less likely than those born in the 1970s to move into the top 20% income group, according to a 2019 study.

Amid growing inequality, climbing the social ladder is competitive and increasingly only an option for families that are already wealthy.

A study, published in 2020, found that while sons of peasants had increased their access to higher education by 11 percentage points between 1945 and 1980 onwards, for sons of professionals the increase was 34 percentage points.

Xi is alert to the frustrations in the population. In 2021, he started talking about the need for "common prosperity", reviving a Mao-era phrase that was also invoked by Deng Xiaoping, the leader who oversaw China's reform and opening up, who said that by letting "some people get rich first", common prosperity would follow.

Xi's common prosperity drive prompted major crackdowns on business and the ultra-rich. It also included measures to cool the competition among *jiwa* parents such as Lynne, by banning for-profit tutoring and setting limits on the amount of homework that children could be told to do.

State media said the policies would reduce the burden on students, but parents complain that they just shifted responsibility from schools to families. Exams remain ruthlessly competitive and the tutoring industry has merely been pushed underground.

Last year, the government ministry of education closed down more than 450 tutoring firms that were continuing to offer lessons despite the ban. "I don't think it's good," says Lynne of the homework bans. "It's more complicated now."

The sudden end of a tutoring industry worth an estimated £96bn, at the expense of millions of jobs for young graduates, is a microcosm of the challenges facing China's leaders.

The middle-class boom promised with it an urban lifestyle closer to that of young graduates in the metropolises of western Europe and the US. China's educated younger generations are overqualified for factory jobs, once the bedrock of China's economy, but have struggled to find meaningful work to take its place. In 2021 more than 70% of unemployed Chinese city-dwellers aged 16 to 24 had a degree.

Many educated elites are no longer confident that they or their children will be able to improve their lives in the way that their parents did. Instead, the government is offering a nationalist, security-based vision of stability, with the economy paying the price if necessary.

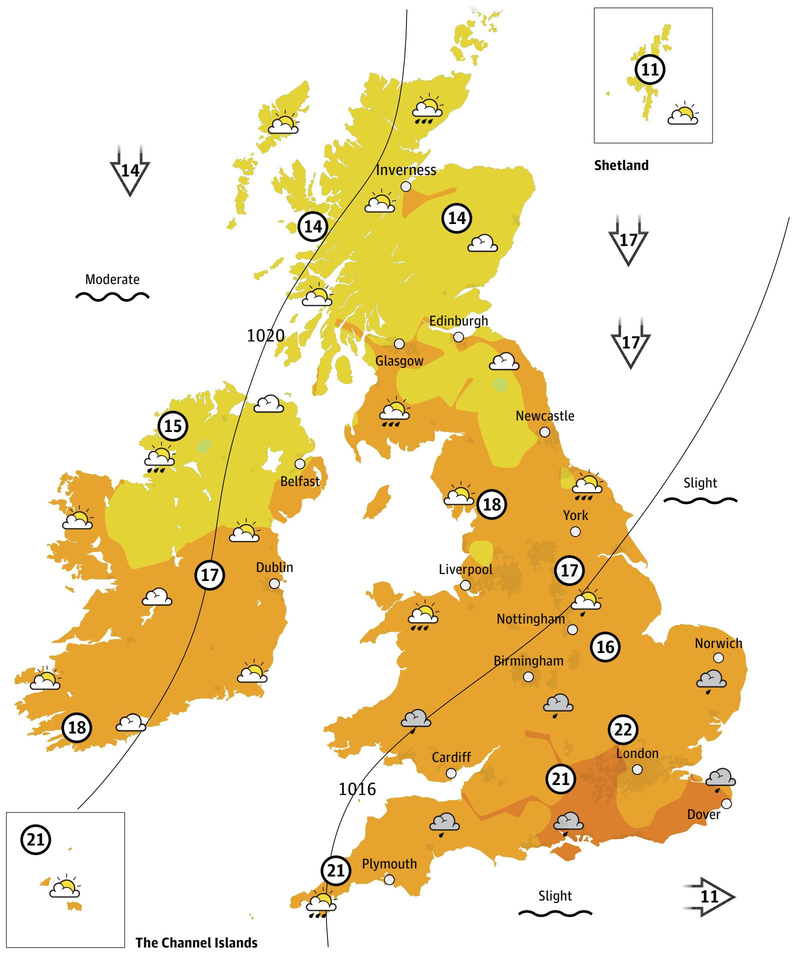
Goldman Sachs still predicts that China will overtake the US to become the world's largest economy by 2035. But other economists think that China will never become No 1, and that its economy will soon peak.

Weather
Tuesday 12 September 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

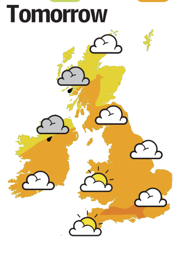
Sunny, Mist, Fog, Sunny intervals, Hazy, Mostly cloudy, Overcast/dull, Sunny showers, Sunny and heavy showers, Light showers, Rain, Sleet, Light snow, Snow showers, Heavy snow, Ice, Thundery rain, Thundery showers, Temperature, ºC, Wind speed, mph, Windy

35C, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0, -5, -10, -15, -20

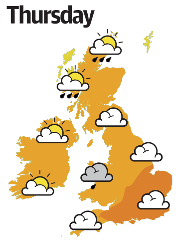


Forecast

Low 8 High 18
Tomorrow



Low 12 High 18
Thursday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

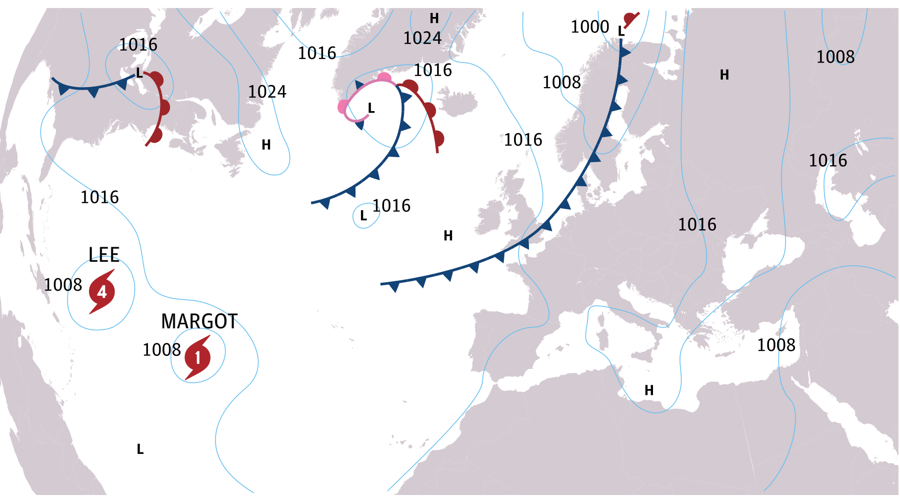
Latest	
08 Sep 2023	418.58
Weekly average	
03 Sep 2023	418.64
11 Sep 2022	416.27
11 Sep 2013	393.92
Pre-industrial base	280
Safe level	350

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	14 22	85%	Low
Manchester	8 17	45%	Low
Edinburgh	8 17	5%	Low
Belfast	7 16	5%	Low
Birmingham	10 17	90%	Low
Brighton	14 22	65%	Low
Bristol	12 19	85%	Low
Cardiff	12 19	90%	Low
Newcastle	6 15	10%	Low
Penzance	13 20	60%	Low

Atlantic front



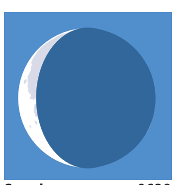
Cold front
Warm front
Occluded front
Trough

High tides

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Aberdeen	**0040**	3.8m	**1316**	3.7m
Avonmouth	**0623**	10.7m	**1843**	11.4m
Barrow	**1100**	7.8m	**2311**	8.3m
Belfast	**1052**	3.0m	**2254**	3.4m
Cobh	**0441**	3.4m	**1706**	3.7m
Cromer	**0553**	4.4m	**1834**	4.4m
Dover	**1047**	5.9m	**2317**	6.0m
Dublin	**1125**	3.5m	**2325**	3.9m
Galway	**0448**	4.3m	**1700**	4.6m
Greenock	**--**	--	**1219**	3.0m
Harwich	**1102**	3.6m	**2333**	3.8m
Holyhead	**1008**	4.8m	**2215**	5.2m
Hull	**0527**	6.4m	**1806**	6.3m
Leith	**0200**	4.8m	**1431**	4.9m
Liverpool	**1048**	8.1m	**2259**	8.5m
London Bridge	**0054**	6.2m	**1322**	6.1m
Lossiemouth	**1138**	3.5m	**2339**	3.7m
Milford Haven	**0544**	5.8m	**1801**	6.2m
Newquay	**0437**	5.9m	**1654**	6.2m
North Shields	**0248**	4.4m	**1520**	4.4m
Oban	**0538**	3.2m	**1735**	3.5m
Penzance	**0409**	4.6m	**1626**	5.0m
Plymouth	**0500**	4.6m	**1712**	4.9m
Portsmouth	**1116**	4.2m	**2307**	4.2m
Southport	**1016**	7.8m	**2227**	8.2m
Stornoway	**0638**	4.0m	**1847**	4.4m
Weymouth	**0552**	0.6m	**1751**	0.8m
Whitby	**0320**	4.9m	**1552**	4.9m
Wick	**1103**	3.0m	**2307**	3.2m
Workington	**1113**	7.1m	**2324**	7.5m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0629
Sun sets	1922
Moon rises	0307
Moon sets	1901
New Moon	15 Sept

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	1950 to 0653
Birm'ham	1930 to 0637
Brighton	1922 to 0632
Bristol	1933 to 0642
Carlisle	1937 to 0639
Cork	1956 to 0705
Dublin	1949 to 0655
Glasgow	1944 to 0645
Harlech	1940 to 0646
Inverness	1944 to 0642
London	1922 to 0631
M'chester	1933 to 0639
Newcastle	1932 to 0635
Norwich	1918 to 0625
Penzance	1943 to 0654

Weather tracker

Hurricane Lee, the 12th named storm of the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season, will continue on its north-westwards trajectory across the Atlantic Ocean this week. Lee rapidly developed into a category 5 hurricane last week, packing maximum sustained winds of almost 155mph on Friday. By Sunday, this had fallen closer to 105mph, a category 2 hurricane.

Lee will continue to move to the north of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, causing dangerous surf and rip currents across Bermuda and the US east coast this week. Towards the middle of this week, atmospheric conditions will cause Lee to gradually turn northwards.

Record-breaking temperatures across northern Europe will return closer to the seasonal average this week. In France, Météo France placed 14 departments on a tier-three orange warning for heatwave conditions, the first time this has occurred in September.

Extreme rainfall is expected across parts of South America through this week. The state of Rio Grande do Sul, in southern Brazil, and large parts of Uruguay could experience daily rainfall totals between 40mm and 60mm.

Alice Fowle *MetDesk*

Around the world

Algiers	29	Lisbon	26
Ams'dam	23	Madrid	27
Athens	28	Malaga	30
Auckland	16	Melb'rne	22
B Aires	17	Mexico C	26
Bangkok	33	Miami	33
Barcelona	26	Milan	30
Basra	46	Mombasa	30
Beijing	28	Moscow	19
Berlin	29	Mumbai	33
Bermuda	31	N Orleans	33
Brussels	23	Nairobi	27
Budapest	31	New Delhi	33
C'hagen	21	New York	27
Cairo	31	Oslo	22
Cape Town	17	Paris	21
Chicago	20	Perth	22
Corfu	30	Prague	29
Dakar	32	Reykjavik	10
Dhaka	33	Rio de J	28
Dublin	16	Rome	28
Florence	31	Shanghai	30
Gibraltar	27	Singapore	32
H Kong	31	Stockh'm	21
Harare	30	Strasb'g	30
Helsinki	22	Sydney	20
Istanbul	26	Tel Aviv	33
Jo'burg	17	Tenerife	30
K Lumpur	32	Tokyo	31
K'mandu	31	Toronto	20
Kabul	33	Vancouv'r	16
Kingston	36	Vienna	30
Kolkata	33	Warsaw	29
L Angeles	29	Wash'ton	30
Lagos	30	Well'ton	14
Lima	22	Zurich	28

Football
Scotland will not make overtures to Newcastle pair
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Rugby World Cup
Robert Kitson: consistent refereeing is key
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Sport



▲ *The Savannah Bananas dance together before facing their bitter rivals, the Party Animals*
KATHERINE WOOLSON/MLB PHOTOS/GETTY IMAGES

Scripted reality

Savannah Bananas and Wrexham portend surreal future for sport



Jonathan Liew

The pitcher walks back to the mound, ball sheathed in his right hand, quietly contemplating his next move. Sixty feet away, the batter raises and cocks his bat in anticipation. Then the pitcher slowly removes his shirt, flings his glove and cap to one side and launches into a sexy rendition of a Celine Dion song, while his teammates gather in formation around him and wave flares. Behind home plate, the umpire is enthusiastically twerking.

The Savannah Bananas were born a decade ago, when a former pitcher called Jesse Cole was coaching a team in the Cape Cod league for the summer and realised the game he was watching was boring him to tears. So he bought a small team in Savannah, renamed it the Bananas, put on a yellow tuxedo, hired a group of elderly cheerleaders named the Banana Nanas, and thus was built a sensation that in a few short years has begun to change the way people think about sport.

The mantra of the Bananas is, in the words of Cole, to "make baseball fun". There are dance routines, batters on stilts, somersaulting fielders, trick plays galore. Pitchers will frequently throw the ball from a trampoline. Bats will occasionally be on fire. Paddling pools on the field and barbecues in the dugout are a common sight. There are different rules to regular baseball, too: a strict two-hour time limit, no walks, no bunts, and if a fan in the crowd catches a foul ball, it counts as an out.

Whether any of this actually strikes you as fun depends whether or not you sit in the intended target market. And, on the surface, it is easy enough to dismiss the Bananas as an irreverent sideshow, a novelty circus act, albeit a wildly successful one. The waiting list for tickets at Grayson Stadium is around 550,000, and growing by thousands every day. Nationwide exhibition tours have sold out within hours. Spread first by word of mouth, and then by social media, the Bananas now have a TikTok following outstripping any other professional baseball team in America. Executives and sporting promoters from around the world flock to Georgia to try to decrypt the Bananas formula. In short, the Bananas model has real-world implications: a vision of sport that – for better or worse – may well be coming to an arena near you soon.

The Bananas do not play in an organised league. Last year they withdrew from the Coastal Plain League, and now operate as a kind of full-time touring act, taking on local invitational sides as well as a hired pantomime nemesis called the Party Animals. Breaking out of the structures of organised baseball and leaning into the world of scripted entertainment has allowed them to unlock revenue streams unimaginable to most local sporting teams: an ESPN documentary, a global merchandising business, commercial and brand partnerships.

While the Bananas may be a madcap outlier, with their on-field paddling pools and dancing umpires, many of their tactics are merely an absurdist extension of trends that have been evident in professional sport for a while, many borrowed from the more curated worlds of reality television, social media influencers and big-time wrestling.

What is the Hundred, for example, if not an attempt to create a new entertainment-themed product almost entirely divorced from the existing traditions and structures of English cricket? Is it such a big leap from the choreographed fan dance to the choreographed player dance? How long before someone at World Snooker decides that what the kids really want to see is Mark Selby and Shaun Murphy riding their cues like a lap-dance pole before a World Grand Prix quarter-final? If you are a sport struggling for eyeballs and audience demographic, then ultimately the only legitimate arbiter of taste here is the market.

Perhaps the closest parallel to the Bananas in the UK is Wrexham, whose evolution from backwater community football club to global entertainment brand is well under way. Over the summer, powered by their Hollywood stardust and Disney+ documentary, Wrexham have signed a clutch of lucrative commercial deals with the likes of United Airlines, Danone and HP (the electronics conglomerate, not the sauce). Exhibition games in North Carolina, California and Pennsylvania were packed out, with tickets going for up to £400. They are predicted to turn over around £20m this season, which would put them ahead of many Championship clubs.

> *The only legitimate arbiter of taste here is the market*

If you think about it, does any of this income really rely on Wrexham playing Barrow and Sutton? Perhaps the long-term goal is to work their way up the divisions and into the Premier League, a fraught objective that could be derailed by any of a thousand external factors. But surely the more innovative play is to reinvent themselves entirely as an A-list touring commodity, establish a standalone brand with a string of hand-picked opponents and celebrity cameos, and teach Paul Mullin to dance. If you're a prospective investor, which model of success makes more sense to you?

Because for all the emphasis on entertainment, there is also an intentional disruption here. By circulating the idea that baseball needs to be "made fun" again the Bananas are not just defining themselves against something that already exists, but aggressively targeting its market. Their success should serve as an early portent that the future of sport may not look much like sport at all.

Vunipola set to make return for England against Japan

Gerard Meagher
Le Touquet

England are ready to welcome Billy Vunipola back for their second World Cup match against Japan on Sunday and potentially offset the loss of Tom Curry, who learns whether he will be suspended following his red card against Argentina today.

Vunipola is available to face Japan in Nice having sat out last Saturday's 27-10 victory over Argentina after a red card against Ireland during England's warm-up campaign. Last week Vunipola was seen training on his own, away from the rest of the squad, but the defence coach Kevin Sinfield has confirmed the No 8 is fit for selection.

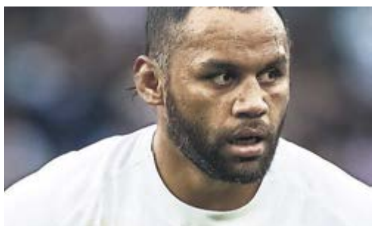
Like Owen Farrell the week before him – and Curry last Saturday – Vunipola was sent off after a yellow card for a dangerous tackle which was upgraded to red via the bunker review system. Ben Earl impressed against Argentina but if Curry is suspended at today's disciplinary hearing in Paris he would likely move to openside flanker with Vunipola coming into the side at No 8. Vunipola was the only specialist in this position selected by Steve Borthwick in England's World Cup squad and with the 30-year-old short on game time and his head coach eager to get him up to speed, he is likely to feature against Japan.

"He is a big powerful man, he has got some wonderful leadership qualities which we have seen since he has been back in camp," said Sinfield.

Vunipola missed just two matches – the defeat by Fiji as well as the victory over Argentina – after completing tackle school in order to reduce his ban. With Farrell, Vunipola and Curry all seeing red in the past month, however, Sinfield has conceded that eliminating the jeopardy of red cards is not possible. He added: "People expect it just to be fixed because they have gone through tackle school, as I pointed out last time, just because you do a speed awareness course, doesn't mean you are never going to speed again, so we continue to do that."

Curry, who was sent off inside three minutes for a head-on-head collision with Juan Cruz Mallía – just as the Argentina full-back had landed after gathering a kick – is facing an entry level ban of six matches if his red card is upheld but can expect that to be reduced to two if he attends tackle school. He may also have reason for optimism after both Jesse Kriel of South Africa and Chile's Martín Sigren avoided citings yesterday for similar, if far from identical, incidents.

While Scotland's head coach, Gregor Townsend, was among those who queried what he called "inconsistencies" in decision making after Kriel's collision with Jack Dempsey, World Rugby is understood to be satisfied that the correct process was followed in all three incidents.



▲ *Billy Vunipola is fit to feature after training following his suspension*

Rugby World Cup
In brief

South Africa

Biggar says England win gave Wales boost

Dan Biggar says England's stirring victory over Argentina helped underpin Wales's mindset in their thrilling 32-26 win over Fiji.

"I thought England were absolutely magnificent after going down to 14 men," the Wales fly-half said. "We spoke about having a little bit of a similar mindset – whether we lose a player or go down a bit, still working your absolute socks off. I think it was quite good for us watching that game, to be honest, as a team. It was almost like the red card was better for England than Argentina. I thought it galvanised them and they absolutely worked their socks off."

Biggar added: "Results are the only thing that matter in this tournament. We are off to a good start, and if we win next weekend [against Portugal] it will be a really good start and we can build to the final two games then." **PA Media**

South Africa

Injured Etzebeth may miss Ireland match

South Africa's Eben Etzebeth is a doubt to face Ireland after suffering a shoulder injury in their 18-3 win over Scotland. The Springboks' director of rugby, Rassie Erasmus, said the team were waiting on scans to confirm the extent of the injury but that the lock forward would likely be out for 10 days, with the match in Paris against the world No 1 side on 23 September. Erasmus said: "We might find out it's much more serious, but at this stage it looks like a 10-day injury." **AP**

Scotland

'Bruised' Russell will be fit for next game

Scotland are confident they have come through a bruising encounter with South Africa without sustaining any notable injuries. Finn Russell took a couple of heavy blows but the coach Brad Mooar said: "Finn's all good. Clearly it was a very physical game, as you'd expect, so there's the odd bruise and bump but nothing that's going to keep people out." **PA Media**

Analysis
Robert Kitson



DANIEL COLE/AP

◀ *Tom Curry is waiting to hear whether his red card for a tackle on Juan Cruz Mallía will be upheld*

Curry confusion highlights tournament's need for clear and consistent officiating

Unexpected twists and turns are the *raison d'etre* of major tournaments. The opening weekend of the 2023 Rugby World Cup contained plenty, from England's 14-man tour de force against Argentina to the thrills and spills of the Wales-Fiji game in Bordeaux. At its best, rugby union delivers as much passion, drama and intensity as any team sport.

What about Manie Libbok's fabulous no-look cross-kick for Kurt-Lee Arendse's try against Scotland, as skilful a piece of deception as you will see? Or George Ford's hat-trick of drop goals? Not forgetting the round of applause in Marseille's old town cafes when the scrum-half Gabriel Rupanu briefly put Romania ahead with an early try against Ireland.

Perhaps, instead, you preferred the impromptu Welsh choirs in the centre of Bordeaux, the bouncing enthusiasm of thousands of France and Argentina fans or kilted Scots and green-shirted Bokke diehards mixing happily in the Mediterranean sunshine. Or Fiji's revival. Had they managed a last-gasp try to complete a stunning comeback at Wales's expense, the post-match visuals would have been seriously epic.

And yet. Rugby has so much to offer the neutral fan but it still struggles badly when it comes to refereeing and disciplinary consistency. No surprise, perhaps, given the litany of laws and sub-clauses and the near-impossible job facing referees. But if a primary aim of a World Cup is to woo new fans rather than leave everyone looking confused, the opening weekend once again raised more questions than it answered.

We do not yet know, for example, whether the high-profile sending-off of England's Tom Curry, the earliest red card in World Cup history, will definitely be upheld when his case is heard this week. If it is, what about a number of other head clashes over the weekend? On social media an awful lot of people are discussing Curry's collision with Juan Cruz Malliá and wondering why South Africa's Jesse Kriel, Chile's Martín Sigren and Wales's Dan Biggar received lesser sanctions.

These are precisely the conversations rugby's authorities did not want to hear in the early days of the competition. The beefed-up 'bunker review' system, now involving two officials, was meant to reduce the uncertainty and jeopardy. Instead there are still far too many shades of grey. Or, to be a touch more accurate, shades of rosé. When is a red not a red? And vice versa? Not everyone seems wholly sure.

This matters hugely because the margins between the leading teams are tighter than they have ever been. What if England had lost to Argentina having played almost the entire game with 14 players, only for Curry's card to be subsequently rescinded? And if Curry's red is downgraded back to a yellow, what does that say about the whole bunker concept?



▲ *Gabriel Rupanu gives Romania a shock early lead against Ireland*

The pre-tournament argument was that everything would be OK, with the governing body World Rugby fully in control of the disciplinary process. As such, there is less reason to challenge panel rulings as happened during the Owen Farrell saga last month.

Equally, though, it permits fewer excuses. If consistency continues to be frustratingly elusive when teams are playing in the same country at the same time in the same conditions with the same group of officials, what hope is there for anybody else?

It is a mixed blessing, too, that only two replays are available to the on-field referee, the aim being to refer incidents more quickly and not disrupt the flow of the game unduly. The flip side is that supporters inside venues are being left in the dark.

Amid all this confusion – intent is not part of the equation – there is also another fundamental flaw. Is it actually possible, in every case, to arrive at an objective and definitive decision? Are the bunker occupants back in Paris viewing incidents in their full context? Or is there a crucial disconnect between poring over slow-motion footage in a darkened video room and playing high-speed contact sport at the highest possible level?

Possibly more concerning than all of this is a wider question. Marginally misjudged high tackles are not, in the end, the source of most disquiet among supporters of all nations. Wales's valour and defensive appetite against Fiji were remarkable but did both sides receive strictly equal treatment? When a so-called 'tier one' nation is repeatedly penalised close to their own line and receives merely a warning, only for a 'tier two' side to have a player sent to the sin-bin for a solitary offence at the other end immediately afterwards, accusations of unfairness are inevitable.

The history of the modern game is littered with similar examples. But even taking into account the fact certain penalties are viewed as more cynical than others, it further underlines rugby's ability to baffle new supporters. What about the no-arms tackle that seemed to deny Fiji on the Welsh line? Should it have been an automatic penalty try? Or should a 'captain's referral' be made available to sides in the last 10 minutes of games to reduce the chance of major miscarriages of justice? If this World Cup is to maximise its huge potential, rugby urgently needs clearer, more consistent officiating.

Djokovic is hungry for more after grand slam title No 24

Tumaini Carayol
Flushing Meadows

▼ *Novak Djokovic has won three out of four grand slams this year*
KENA BETANCUR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



The early days of Novak Djokovic's summer had left him with some adversity to overcome. He was not merely outplayed by Carlos Alcaraz in the Wimbledon final, he was also outfought and outlasted.

But Djokovic's greatness has been defined by his ability to rise from difficult losses stronger than before. In Sunday's US Open final his response was predictable and decisive as he held on through countless exhausting rallies to defeat Daniil Medvedev 6-3, 7-6 (5), 6-3 and win a men's record-extending 24th grand slam title.

By virtue of winning his first round match at this tournament, Djokovic also ensured that he will regain his place as world No 1 and extend his all-time record to 390 weeks at the top of the ATP rankings. The 36-year-old will return to the top as the oldest US Open champion in the Open era, and he has now won the tournament four times. The Serb is also the first man to have won three grand slam titles in a season on four separate occasions.

"I would definitely sign right away the paper if somebody would tell me I would win three out of four and play Wimbledon finals," Djokovic said.

"There is a little regret that I didn't win that Wimbledon final. But, look, in the end of the day, I have so much more to be happier and content with than actually to regret something."

In 2021, the last time Djokovic competed in New York, he came to the US Open needing the title to capture a calendar grand slam. Instead, he was humbled in straight sets by Medvedev. But on Sunday Medvedev started off stone cold, errors flowing from his racket in his opening service game, and Djokovic was determined to take the ball early and dominate the baseline with his forehand. He broke Medvedev's serve and then endured the predictably long, attritional exchanges as he eased through his service games to take the first set.

Halfway through the second set, the complexion of the match suddenly changed. As the long rallies began to weigh heavily on both players' legs . For the remainder of the set, Medvedev put significant pressure on Djokovic's serve but each time they reached a decisive point, Djokovic either serve and volleyed or found another way to move forward, producing some spectacular volleys.

Medvedev's biggest opportunity came at 6-5 and set point as Djokovic attempted to serve and volley. Instead of threading his backhand passing shot down the line into open court, he steered it straight at Djokovic, who dispatched his volley and then smiled at his fortune.

"Regrets, for sure," Medvedev said. "Should have won it. Should have won it, but sometimes tennis is not that easy. Passing for sure down the line, not cross, but I have two choices and I chose the wrong one."

At the beginning of the subsequent tie-break, Medvedev held the upper hand. He remained ahead at 5-4 after ending an astonishing 23-stroke rally with a brilliant drop shot. But Djokovic erased Medvedev's lead with brilliant serving before the Russian netted a routine backhand on set point. Somehow, impossibly, Djokovic finished the marathon 104-minute set with a 2-0 lead. He then thoroughly outplayed Medvedev in the final set.

As Djokovic celebrated he paid tribute to Kobe Bryant by wearing a "Mamba Forever" shirt bearing the NBA legend's famous No 24. Bryant, who died in 2020, was a good friend of Djokovic. The champion then embraced his daughter, Tara.

"These are the moments and these are the kind of emotions that I motivate myself with every single day when I'm not playing a tournament," Djokovic said. "Occasionally asking myself: 'Why do I need this still at this stage after all I have done, you know? How long do I want to keep going?' I do have these questions in my head, of course. But knowing that I play at such a high level still and I win the biggest tournaments in this sport … I don't want to leave this sport if I'm still at the top, if I'm still playing the way I'm playing."

Cricket

Daring Durham promoted as Middlesex are hit by sanctions

Tanya Aldred

In a manner most ill-suited to the fearless way in which they have played their cricket throughout 2023, **Durham** were promoted to Division One with a whimper – and without even picking up a bat. The moment came just before lunch at Hove, as **Leicestershire** were dismissed for 108 by **Sussex**, collecting not a single batting point in the process, which left them unable to catch Durham – who now need just five points from their last two games to go up as champions.

Durham strode into the season determined to play attacking cricket, and stuck to their word: winning six games and gathering maximum batting points seven times. "We're not going to Division One just to survive," said head coach Ryan Campbell. "We're going to try to win the thing [title]."

It was apt that on the day of Durham's promotion for the first time since 2016, the ECB handed out sanctions to Middlesex for financial mismanagement. By ECB decree, Durham were relegated to Division Two in 2016 because of financial irregularities, despite finishing fourth, and were docked a further 48 points the following year.

This time, the errant club is Middlesex, reprimanded for poor governance and financial mismanagement. The club has agreed to a financial plan, to be overseen quarterly by the ECB, which requires them to bring in a year-on year-profit and limits spending. The ECB will also reduce payments to the club by £150,000 – £100,000 suspended till October 2025 – and impose points penalties equivalent to maximum points for one win in each competition, also suspended till October 2025.

On the pitch, **Middlesex** had a brighter day, after Sam Robson's 86 inched them to a first innings 194 at Old Trafford. **Lancashire** started their innings brightly until Josh De Caires, son of former England captain Michael Atherton, took the ball. In his first Championship outing at his dad's home ground, he duped Keaton Jennings lbw first ball, before bowling Phil Salt in his next over. When Jayant Yadav bowled Josh Bohannon with a ripper, Lancashire had lost three for 16 before the light closed in.



▲ *Josh de Caires enjoys his first Championship game at Old Trafford*

Results and cricket scoreboards

Cricket

LV= INSURANCE COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP
Division One (second day of four)

Kent v Nottinghamshire

Canterbury Nottinghamshire (4pts) trail Kent (6) by 227 runs with two second-innings wickets remaining

Kent First innings (overnight 387-4)
***JA Leaning** c Mullaney b Paterson ... **64**
†HJ Finch c Moores b Paterson ... **47**
JDM Evison c Moores b James ... **16**
ASS Nijar c sub b Hutton ... **12**
NN Gilchrist c Hutton b James ... **2**
MG Hogan not out ... **0**
YS Chahal c Moores b Hutton ... **0**
Extras (lb15, b14, w5) ... **34**
Total (115.4 overs) ... **446**
Fall 95, 248, 248, 307, 394, 411, 442, 446, 446, 446.
Bowling Hutton 17.4-1-79-2; Fernando 21-3-75-1; Paterson 26-2-82-2; James 11-3-30-2; Harrison 24-1-103-2; Mullaney 16-2-48-1

Nottinghamshire First innings
BT Slater c Leaning b Hogan ... **0**
Hameed c Finch b Hogan ... **9**
***SJ Mullaney** c Bell-Drummond b Nijjar ... **86**
JM Clarke c Leaning b Nijjar ... **62**
M Montgomery c Leaning b Chahal ... **16**
†TJ Moores b Nijjar ... **0**
LW James b Chahal ... **1**
CG Harrison c Leaning b Chahal ... **15**
BA Hutton not out ... **9**
D Paterson not out ... **10**
Extras (lb5, nb6) ... **11**
Total (for 8, 74 overs) ... **219**
Fall 0, 29, 160, 169, 173, 174, 199, 206.
To bat AM Fernando.
Bowling Hogan 13-3-31-2; Gilchrist 16-2-60-0; Chahal 20-6-52-3; Evison 5-0-30-0; Nijjar 20-6-41-3.

Lancashire v Middlesex

Old Trafford Lancashire (3pts) trail Middlesex (1) by 62 runs with seven second-innings remaining

Middlesex First innings (overnight 132-8)
SD Robson b Wells ... **86**
***TS Roland-Jones** c Wells b Bailey ... **26**
ER Bamber not out ... **8**
Extras (lb5, nb4) ... **9**
Total (79.5 overs) ... **132**
Fall 4, 5, 16, 18, 19, 83, 120, 130, 174, 194.
Bowling Bailey 19-8-38-3; Williams 21-7-39-2; L Wood 19-3-52-3; Balderson 12-4-40-1; Hartley 2-0-3-0; Wells 6.5-2-17-1

Lancashire First innings
LWP Wells not out ... **65**
***KK Jennings** lbw b de Caires ... **29**
JJ Bohannon b Yadav ... **7**
†PD Salt b de Caires ... **0**
DJ Vilas not out ... **23**
Extras (lb2, nb6) ... **8**
Total (for 3, 42 overs) ... **132**
Fall 80, 93, 96.
To bat G Bell, GP Balderson, TW Hartley, TE Bailey, WSA Williams, L Wood.
Bowling Bamber 10-4-11-0; Higgins 8-1-35-0; Roland-Jones 3-0-19-0; Yadav 13-4-38-1; De Caires 8-2-27-2

Warwickshire v Northamptonshire

Edgbaston Warwickshire (3pts) trail Northamptonshire (2) by 108 runs with six first-innings wickets remaining

Northamptonshire First innings (overnight 200-5)
S Zaib c Burgess b Hannon-Dalby ... **10**
†LD McManus c Burgess b Rushworth ... **25**
TAI Taylor c Hain b Hannon-Dalby ... **10**
SC Kerrigan lbw b Hannon-Dalby ... **2**
BW Sanderson not out ... **13**
CJ White b Hannon-Dalby ... **0**
Extras (lb12, b6, nb2) ... **20**
Total (94.4 overs) ... **250**
Fall 5, 24, 171, 181, 182, 217, 233, 233, 250, 250.
Bowling Hannon-Dalby 26.4-10-46-7; Rushworth 23-3-71-2; Miles 15-3-41-0; Barnard 15-4-3-1; Rhodes 9-2-26-0; Briggs 6-2-12-0

Warwickshire First innings
RM Yates c Azad b Procter ... **23**
KC Brathwaite c McManus b White ... **9**
***WMH Rhodes** c Zaib b White ... **44**
SR Hain lbw b White ... **30**
DR Mousley not out ... **20**
E Barnard not out ... **4**
Extras (lb2, nb10) ... **12**
Total (for 4, 55 overs) ... **142**
Fall 23, 62, 117, 124.
To bat †MGK Burgess, DR Briggs, CN Miles, OJ Hannon-Dalby, C Rushworth.
Bowling Sanderson 16-5-26-0; White 15-5-37-3; Taylor 15-3-53-0; Procter 9-2-24-1.

Division Two (second day of four)

Glamorgan v Yorkshire

Sophia Gardens Glamorgan (2pts) trail Yorkshire (7) by 350 runs with four first-innings wickets remaining

Yorkshire First innings (overnight 330-3
***Shan Masood** c Northeast b Harris ... **192**
GCH Hill lbw b Harris ... **71**
†JA Tattersall c Cooke b Gorvin ... **6**
ML Revis b Carlson ... **28**
DM Bess not out ... **28**
JA Thompson lbw b Harris ... **0**
BO Coad c Ingram b Carlson ... **4**
BM Cliff run out ... **1**
Extras (lb12, nb8, b5) ... **25**
Total (122 overs) ... **500**
Fall 98, 225, 240, 372, 393, 446, 482, 482, 495, 500.
Bowling McIlroy 25-5-65-2; Harris 28-0-131-3; Kellaway 7-0-21-0; Ul-Hassan 12-0-50-0; Gorvin 16-1-69-1; Carlson 34-1-147-3

Glamorgan First innings
Zain-ul-Hassan b Coad ... **8**
EJ Byrom c Bean b Revis ... **40**
CA Ingram b Thompson ... **5**
SA Northeast b Bess ... **16**
***KS Carlson** not out ... **53**
WT Root c Tattersall b Revis ... **4**
†CB Cooke lbw b Revis ... **4**
DA Douthwaite not out ... **17**
Extras (lb1, nb2) ... **3**
Total (for 6, 50 overs) ... **150**
Fall 10, 19, 66, 82, 96, 100.
To bat BI Kellaway, AW Gorvin, JAR Harris, JP McIlroy.
Bowling Coad 8-3-8-1; Thompson 9-0-30-1; Cliff 8-1-41-0; Bess 17-4-40-1; Revis 5-0-20-3; Hill 3-0-10-0

Gloucestershire v Derbyshire

Bristol Derbyshire (4pts) trail Gloucestershire (5) by 116 runs with four first-innings wickets remaining

Gloucestershire First inning (overnight 333-6)
OJ Price c & b Dal ... **132**
EWO Middleton lbw Dal ... **9**
J Shaw c & b Conners ... **18**
DC Goodman c Guest b Dal ... **6**
LA Charlesworth not out ... **0**
Extras (b4, lb7, nb8) ... **19**
Total (97.1 overs) ... **377**
Fall 80, 85, 128, 169, 326, 332, 341, 366, 376, 377.
Bowling Conners 24-5-81-1; Brown 10-0-62-1; Dal 23.1-4-69-6; Reece 11-2-31-2; Thomson 12-0-54-0; Watt 17-1-69-0

Derbyshire First innings
HRC Came lbw b L A Charlesworth ... **68**
LM Reece c Gohar b Goodman ... **77**
†BD Guest run out ... **15**
WL Madsen lbw b Gohar ... **11**
***JL du Plooy** not out ... **44**
M Lamb c Dent b Gohar ... **24**
S Conners c Bracey b Gohar ... **0**
Dal not out ... **3**
Extras (b1, lb4, w2, nb12) ... **19**
Total (for 6, 75 overs) ... **261**
Fall 132, 169, 177, 203, 252, 255.
To bat MRJ Watt, AT Thomson, PR Brown.
Bowling Shaw 13-1-50-0; Goodman 11-2-49-1; Gohar 25-4-68-3; Charlesworth 10-2-44-1; Middleton 11-1-33-0; Price 5-1-12-0.

Sussex v Leiecestershire

Hove Sussex (4pts) lead Leicestershire (3) by 388 with five second-innings wickets remaining

Sussex First innings 262 (FJ Hudson-Prentice 65; MET Salisbury 5-73)

Leicestershire First innings (overnight 68-2)
RK Patel c Pujara b Karvelas ... **48**
CN Ackermann b Unadkat ... **22**
Umar Amin c Carter b Unadkat ... **2**
R Ahmed c Carter b Karvelas ... **0**
†OB Cox b Karvelas ... **0**
TAR Scriven c Carter b Hudson-Prentice ... **12**
CJC Wright b Hudson-Prentice ... **0**
SW Currie not out ... **9**
MET Salisbury c Haines b Unadkat ... **0**
Extras (b2, lb2) ... **4**
Total (42.4 overs) ... **108**
Fall 10, 48, 73, 75, 76, 78, 93, 93, 107.
Bowling Unadkat 12.4-3-23-3; Karvelas 12-5-14-4; Hudson-Prentice 10-2-30-2; Haines 7-0-33-1; Crocombe 1-0-4-0.

Sussex Second innings
TGR Clark lbw b Ahmed ... **69**
TJ Haines c Hill b Wright ... **34**
TP Alsop b Ahmed ... **31**
***CA Pujara** c Cox b Scriven ... **23**
JM Coles not out ... **43**
†OJ Carter st Cox b Scriven ... **16**
FJ Hudson-Prentice not out ... **15**
Extras (lb1, nb2) ... **3**
Total (for 5, 72 overs) ... **234**
Fall 49, 109, 156, 170, 210.
To bat JJ Carson, A Karvelas, JD Unadkat, HT Crocombe.
Bowling Wright 15-0-54-1; Salisbury 6-2-22-0; Currie 11-1-39-0; Scriven 13-3-30-2; Ackermann 4-0-15-0; Ahmed 21-2-72-2; Umar Amin 2-1-1-0.

ASIA CUP
Colombo India 356-2 (V Kohli 122, KL Rahul 111, Shubman Gill 58, Rohit Sharma 56). Pakistan 128-8 (Kuldeep Yadav 5-25). India beat Pakistan by 228-runs

ICC WOMEN'S T20 WORLD CUP QUALIFIER
Almería Scotland 122-7 (SJ Bryce 49). Netherlands 63 (DEM Carter 3-11. Scotland beat Netherlands by 59 runs.
Almería France 80. Italy 81-1. Italy beat France by nine wickets.

SECOND WOMEN'S ONE-DAY INTERNATIONAL
Karachi Pakistan 168 (Fatima Sana 69, Aliya Riaz 53; N de Klerk 4-32). South Africa 169-4 (T Brits 45). South Africa beat Pakistan by six wickets

Tennis

WTA JAPAN OPEN (Osaka)
First round: N Podoroska (Arg) bt Y Yuan (Chn) 6-4 3-6 7-5; **A Krueger** (US) bt K Baindl (Ukr) 6-2 6-3; **V Savinykh** (Rus) bt A Friedsam (Ger) 6-4 1-6 6-3; **Y Putintseva** (Kaz) bt D Shnaider (Rus) 6-2 6-3

Snooker

SHANGHAI MASTERS (China)
First round: J Higgins (Sco) bt Haohui D (Chn) 6-0; **Fan Z** (Chn) bt G Wilson (Eng) 6-2; **H Vafaei** (Irn) bt Chenzhi G (Chn) 6-1; **A Carter** (Eng) bt Zihao D (Chn) 6-2; **Ding J** (Chn) bt Jiahui S (Chn) 6-2; **J Lisowski** (Eng) bt Zhou Y (Chn) 6-5.

Fixtures

Cricket
Third Men's One-Day International
South Africa v Australia, Potchefstroom (noon)
Second Women's One-Day International
England v Sri Lanka, Northampton (12.30pm)
Asia Cup
Super Four India v Sri Lanka, Colombo (10.30am)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Catterick **1.30** Let Her Loose **2.05** Galileo Glass **2.40** Della **3.10** Wade's Magic **3.40** Propagation **4.15** Birkenhead (nap) **4.50** Highfield Viking (nb); **Leicester** **1.40** Twilight Guest **2.15** Soft Winds **2.50** Autumn Rose **3.25** Cool Dividend **4.00** Haarar **4.35** Miss Bluebelle **5.10** Moulin Booj; **Worcester** **1.50** Lusitanien **2.25** Shot Tower **3.00** Painless Potter **3.30** Marvel Star **4.05** Karavomylos **4.40** Emanate; **Kelso** **4.25** Czech Her Out **5.00** Caithness **5.35** Johnson's Blue **6.05** Sword Of Fate **6.35** Imperial Data **7.05** Jimmy Rabbitte

Manager happy with Henderson and laughs off Ukraine criticism

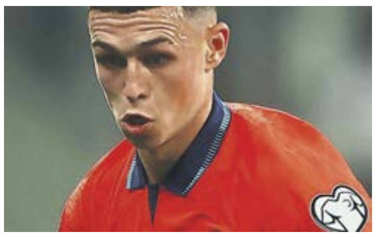
Continued *from back page*

tactically and positionally it was him coming in from the right."

While Southgate gave Foden three starts on the left wing at last year's World Cup, there have long been calls for England to give more freedom to their creative players. Southgate faced accusations of negativity after playing a midfield of Declan Rice, Jordan Henderson and Jude Bellingham against Ukraine. He was happy to highlight that Henderson's move to the Saudi Pro League did not hurt the Al-Ettifaq midfielder's physical data in Wroclaw.

"We have been monitoring that in terms of his training," Southgate said. "Obviously we have got good contacts at the club so we have been monitoring his level. The physical outputs have been mixed because the climate has been different for different games, but he was in good physical condition. His data, he was hitting what he should have done."

Southgate was unmoved by criticism of his side's draw with Ukraine, pointing out that it did not hurt England's dominance of their qualifying group for Euro 2024. "We saw what happened in our group later that night," he said. "When we beat North Macedonia people were questioning the standard of the opposition, but Italy went there and couldn't get the win. We know the cycle with England. It's constant, but we have to focus internally on what's important for us."



Phil Foden has excelled centrally for Manchester City this season

Scotland

England

Tonight 7.45pm

Scotland
Probable: 3-4-2-1
Gunn; Hendry, Porteous, Tierney; Hickey, McGregor, Gilmour, Robertson; McTominay, McGinn; Adams
Subs from
McCrorie, Clark, Souttar, McKenna, Patterson, Armstrong, Ferguson, Jack, McLean, Christie, Dykes, Nisbet, Shankland

England
Probable: 4-3-3
Ramsdale; Walker, Maguire, Guéhi, Trippier; Rice, Phillips, Bellingham; Foden, Kane, Rashford.
Subs from
Johnstone, Pickford, Dunk, Colwill, Tomori, Gallagher, Eze, Saka, Henderson, Maddison, Wilson, Nketiah

Venue Hampden Park
Referee Davide Massa (It)
14°
TV Channel 4 **Radio** BBC 5 Live

Harry Kane scored a late equaliser on England's last visit to Hampden Park
LEE SMITH/ACTION IMAGES/REUTERS



Southgate's history lesson shines light on fierce rivalry

Having witnessed some epic contests between the two sides, England manager is ready for another tough test

David Hytner
Glasgow

Gareth Southgate has mentioned his dirty secret previously - how he was a Scotland fan before he was an England fan. And yet when he did so here, in the Hampden Park auditorium, in the buildup to tonight's showpiece between Scotland and his England team, a celebration of the oldest rivalry in international football, it seemed to carry extra resonance.

It was out of necessity, of course. And ignorance, Southgate said with a smile. England had not qualified for the 1978 World Cup but Scotland had and the seven-year-old him simply wanted to support a British team. "I kind of followed it through the trauma of Peru and the Netherlands," Southgate said, firing memories of Scotland's defeat in the opening group game and the Archie Gemmill-inspired victory in the third that was not enough to see them advance. "They were a British team … I didn't realise it all then. You just got your sticker album and did what you did. I soon saw the error of my ways."

Southgate said that one of his first memories as a fan was when he watched Scotland's 2-1 win over England at Wembley in 1977 on TV. "It was when some of your mates nicked the goalposts," Southgate told a Scottish reporter, taking everyone back to the Tartan Army pitch invasion and the infamous breaking of the crossbar.

It is impossible not to see Scotland as a reference point for Southgate, as a supporter and then on and through his professional career. He won two of his 57 caps as a player against them while he has presided over three games against them as a manager; each one has been a mini epic.

Now another looms, another marker, this time on the road to next summer's Euro 2024 finals. It is not a qualifier, rather a "heritage" match to acknowledge the 150th anniversary of the fixture. The first meeting was a 0-0 draw in Partick. It is no friendly - how can it be? It matters because of the historical context and the current one.

Southgate knows the cycle better than anyone. A flat performance, an underwhelming result - as in the 1-1 draw against Ukraine in Poland on Saturday - and the criticism is harsh. "It's constant, it's never ending," Southgate said, throwing in, almost as an aside, that the pitch in Wroclaw was not conducive to incisive, first-time passing. "You needed a little extra touch or there was a little bobble," he said.

The Ukraine game, despite representing the first dent in England's 100% record in Euros qualifying, has made things spicier for Southgate, certainly in terms of his selection because a setback after Wroclaw would not be a good look. Does he prioritise his regulars on a hostile occasion? Or does he blood the less experienced in order for them to grow?

"The first thing is we cannot fiddle around with the team because we are playing a top-level side," Southgate said, with a nod towards Scotland winning all five of their Euro qualifying ties. "You cannot overly experiment because that would be ridiculous.

"You've also got to find out about certain players. You have got to be bold enough to do that. This will be something different for those who were not in the last England v Scotland game."

The previous meeting was the 0-0 Wembley draw at the last Euro finals, played in the summer of 2021 when Southgate admitted his team were caught up in the emotion and Scotland were value for the point. But what he really meant was the last fixture at Hampden: the 2-2 World Cup qualifying draw in 2017 when Leigh Griffiths sparked mayhem in the stands with a pair of late free kicks for Scotland before Harry Kane volleyed a 93rd-minute equaliser. Southgate had previously said that he could "still see the back of Griffiths's head in my nightmares" as he addressed the free kicks. Was the game a big moment in his story as manager?

"Well, yes, but there are loads, aren't there?" he replied. "For Harry to get the equaliser when he did was so important for so many different reasons. They are important moments, good reference points for a team."

Southgate's first managerial game against Scotland came in 2016 when he was still caretaker; had he not won, he has admitted, he would not have carried on. And everybody knows about his first match against them as a player: the Euro 96 victory at Wembley, England's greatest triumph in the fixture.

Southgate was asked about his other game as a player against Scotland: the second leg of the Euro 2000 playoff at Wembley. Scotland won 1-0 on the night and it goes down as their only victory over England since 1985. But was it truly a win? As Southgate was quick to point out, England were 2-0 up from the first leg thanks to a pair of goals from Paul Scholes. Southgate was an unused substitute that night at Hampden. "I remember after Scholesy's first goal, [assistant manager] Arthur Cox telling us all to sit down on the bench," Southgate said. "Then he leapt up and ran about 30 yards after the second!

"They were like every England v Scotland game, really intense, great occasions to be part of. I think the stories and the history are handed down. Both teams will be trying to find the right balance between competing and being composed." Of course, that's easier said than done.

Rewind to … 1872

The 0-0 draw between Scotland and England on 30 November 1872 is recognised by Fifa as the first ever international. A crowd of 4,000 at the West of Scotland Cricket Club in Partick, Glasgow, saw a home team comprising players from Queen's Park get the better of the first half but England grew stronger after the break. There were some notable differences: passing was still in its infancy as players mostly dribbled the ball to advance up the pitch. And the two goalkeepers, Robert Gardner (Scotland) and Robert Barker (England), played the first half in goal and the second half up front.



Some of William Ralston's sketches of the 1872 match

Scotland's rise is built with exported goods

While Clarke's team are enjoying success and a feelgood factor, the domestic game has some way to go

Ewan Murray

Scottish football's warm glow will extend to cartwheels and somersaults if England are seen off in the 150th anniversary match at Hampden Park. Success in Cyprus on Friday took Steve Clarke's team to within touching distance of Euro 2024. Acceleration under Clarke has captured the hearts and minds of a nation.

It would be a mistake, however, to depict Clarke – an excellent manager – and his talented squad as reflective of the Scottish football scene. Clarke wants the best possible group at his disposal and can revel in the naming of nine English Premier League players in his squad for this double header. Kieran Tierney and Lewis Ferguson are plying their trade in La Liga and Serie A respectively. Half a dozen of those initially called up are based in Scotland, versus 14 from Clarke's first contingent in the troubled times of 2019.

Where does this leave Scotland's top flight and can it somehow cling to the coattails of the international side with any legitimacy? If it cannot, Scotland's football authorities should be working furiously on infrastructure while everything front-facing appears so good.

Callum McGregor – who, in fairness, could play in a superior league had he any interest in leaving Celtic – was the sole Scottish Premiership representative from 16 who featured in Larnaca. This Scotland squad is laced with exports; not just Tierney and Ferguson but Jack Hendry, Aaron Hickey, Nathan Patterson, Scott McKenna, Ryan Porteous, Ryan Christie, Stuart Armstrong, Lyndon Dykes, Kenny McLean and Kevin Nisbet. Perhaps that flow towards Saudi Arabia, Brentford and so many spots in between means Scotland's national game is justifying its existence but a scratch below the surface of some Premiership numbers makes alarming reading for anybody interested in the bigger picture.

The recent Old Firm clash at Ibrox involved 32 players. Just six – and two in Rangers colours – were Scottish. Celtic have a tried and tested transfer strategy that has made them the finest team in the country, without either the desire or the ability to coax a stable of Scots. When Ange Postecoglou's side hosted lower-league Morton in last season's Scottish Cup one young prospect, the Irishman Bosun Lawal, was given minutes: three of them. Rangers did give the young Englishman Johnly Yfeko a start against the same opposition in this season's League Cup, but there was not a single Scot in their starting XI. For those who believe it is unfair to pick on Celtic and Rangers, St Mirren's draw with Aberdeen on 27 August is a decent reference point. The Paisley club had three Scots listed out of 20 on their team sheet. Aberdeen's six looked radical in comparison.



Callum McGregor was the only domestic player to feature in Cyprus

All of this could be swatted away if the Scottish Premiership was turning heads. Instead, embarrassment in European club competition is common. The national team's tremendous work is an anomaly against the inauspicious quality of week-to-week business.

"In my opinion you should try to have a Scottish core in your team," says Robbie Neilson, whose second tenure at Hearts ended in April. "The challenges relate to cost. Generally the player will be under contract so you need to pay a fee, whereas most of the players brought into Scotland are free transfers."

Of the 80 players who made permanent moves to the Premiership in the summer window, a mere 14 are Scottish. Between them Celtic, Rangers, Hearts and Hibs did not sign a single Scot. But should we care if Clarke continues to work his magic? Are supporters right to place results over the nationalities of players? "It is a reflection of the league," says Neilson. "If we want the Scottish national team at the elite level then the players need to be there."

Dykes, of QPR, would hardly take offence at being excluded from that category, but the striker has served Clarke with distinction. Dykes was developed at Livingston by David Martindale, who continues to defy the odds on a minuscule budget.

"The Scottish talent is there but for a club of our size, it 100% comes down to cost," says Martindale. "I had six Scottish players in my office over the summer and couldn't afford one of them. If I look south I should really be going for League One players but there is no way on earth finances allow that."

Martindale's comment inadvertently points towards the Scottish Premiership's level. Scotland's national team is at its highest standing for decades. The league picture is, putting it kindly, less flattering.

'No phone calls' Clarke will not chase Barnes and Anderson

Ewan Murray

Steve Clarke has made clear he has no interest in pursuing Elliot Anderson and Harvey Barnes as the Newcastle pair deliberate whether or not to commit their international futures to Scotland or England.

Anderson appeared in a Scotland squad for the first time before last week's meeting with Cyprus but returned to his club after two days of training. It now appears clear the 20-year-old, who was born in Whitley Bay and played for England at Under-19 level, is reconsidering his position. Gareth Southgate has said England "like" the midfielder.

Barnes has one full England cap but has also been courted in the past; reports at the weekend stated the former Leicester player is contemplating a switch of nations.

"If we can find people who will improve us and who really, really want to be with us then we can improve the squad that way," said Clarke prior to Scotland's meeting with England at Hampden Park today.

"If there are people who have a little doubt and not quite sure then I am not going to be phoning up and trying to persuade anybody to come.

"I want a Che Adams, I want a Lyndon Dykes. On board from the first minute they walked in the door, on board with everyone at it. They understand what it means to everybody within the group. They got the message straight away and have been fantastic for us."

Regarding the specifics of the Anderson situation, Clarke added: "There was a conversation that I had earlier in the year. All quiet. I then got a call to say he wanted to come. So we brought him up, he picked up a knock and went back. And it puts him in the situation where he was before he came to camp.

"He can play for England, he can play for Scotland. That's it and there is nothing else I can do on that. We will see how it pans out."

On Barnes, the Scotland manager explained: "I am not going to say I haven't spoken to Harvey because I have. But that was a long time ago. I haven't heard from him since. The next phone call won't be from me."

Euro 2024 qualifying

Spot-on Ramsey and Brooks revive Wales' bid

Latvia 0

Wales 2

Ramsey 29pen, Brooks 90

Ben Fisher

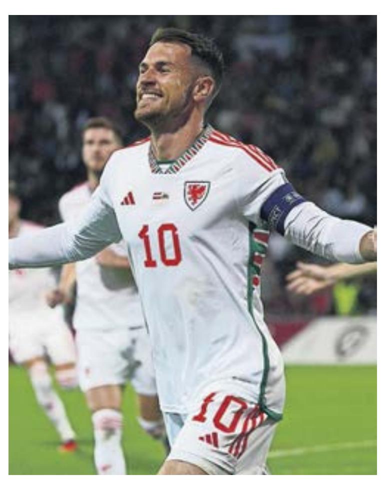
Skonto Stadium

And breathe. Into six of seven minutes of second-half stoppage time David Brooks sealed Wales's crucial victory. Seconds before the relief when Danny Ward claimed a free-kick was audible from thousands of Wales supporters. Rob Page proclaimed he would take a scruffy 1-0 win and they had to sweat to a earn a crucial victory that revives their hopes of automatic qualification. Aaron Ramsey's 100th senior career goal, from the penalty spot, opened the scoring but Wales also endured their share of hairy moments.

A 15-second countdown to kick-off was displayed on the big screen at one end of this no-frills stadium within walking distance of the cobbled old town. At that moment Page, who last week acknowledged the external negativity surrounding his team and on the eve of the game did not hide from questions about his future amid mounting scrutiny, could be forgiven for wondering whether this would be the last time. Wales had won one of their previous 13 matches, that unconvincing 1-0 victory coming against Latvia in Cardiff in March.

Wales needed a fast start and they got one. Brennan Johnson shot over with barely a minute gone after latching on to a zipped Ethan Ampadu pass and then Chris Mepham made a thudding block which cannoned off the Latvia midfielder Janis Ikaunieks for a corner. From that set piece Ampadu sent a header over and then a few minutes later, from another corner, Ben Davies rose to register Wales's first effort on target, his cushioned header forcing a save from Roberts Ozols. Johnson then wriggled clear of Kristers Tobers but shot over.

Connor Roberts forced Ozols into a fine, plunging save with a smart header from a Neco Williams cross and Roberts more than played his part when Wales opened the scoring approaching the half-hour. Ramsey pinged a diagonal ball from left to right in search of Roberts and the Burnley full-back did superbly to prevent the pass going out of play and hoicked the ball towards Harry Wilson, who was barged over in the box by Kaspars Dubra. It was soft but clumsy in equal measure.



▲ *Aaron Ramsey celebrates after opening the scoring for Wales*

Ramsey picked up the ball, nestled it under his left armpit and then, when the referee, Michal Ocenas, blew his whistle, coolly rolled the ball in, sending Ozols the wrong way. Ramsey wheeled away towards the nearest corner flag, where he was joined by every outfield teammate. A few plastic cups of beer quickly emptied as they were flung towards him in celebration.

Wales supporters had taken over this modest three-sided ground with a rubble car park at one end, reminiscent of Oxford United's Kassam Stadium. It was at that end Ramsey dispatched his penalty. At that point everything was rosy. Wales were dominating possession and should have had another couple of goals on the scoreboard. Williams elected to cut inside on to his right foot rather than shoot first time after reaching Johnson's high cross and Johnson then drilled wide after Ramsey freed Tottenham's deadline-day signing.

Moments later Wilson had a shot saved. But in the minutes leading up to half-time Latvia gave Wales a fright. Ward saved from Ikaunieks and then flapped at the subsequent corner but Latvia's Raimonds Krollis was a split-second late to react and could only nudge wide.

Wales faded in the first half and failed to reassert their authority early in the second. Ramsey's departure on 49 minutes hindered their attempt to regain control and by the time he was replaced by David Brooks the dynamic of the game had already shifted. Jordan James released Johnson but the Wales No 9 fired wide, perhaps guilty of trying too hard.

A flashpoint arrived soon after the hour. James was on the receiving end of a crude, high tackle by Ikaunieks, earning the Latvia midfielder a booking. The referee headed to the VAR monitor to review whether the incident was a red card offence but stuck with his original decision.

Williams and Brooks passed up opportunities before the latter struck, but Latvia went close to notching an equaliser approaching the end of normal time. Ikaunieks stepped inside off the right flank, Williams slipped and presented the forward with a chance to strike at goal and his powerful shot, to the relief of Wales, rattled the side netting.

Latvia
4-2-3-1
Ozols; Savalnieks●, Dubra●, Cernomordijs, Ciganiks●; Emsis●, Tobers●; Jaunzems (Daskevics 86), Krollis, J Ikaunieks●; Uldrikis (Regza 86)

Wales
3-4-2-1
Ward; Mepham●, Rodon, B Davies; Roberts, Ampadu, J James, N Williams; Ramsey (Brooks 49), Wilson; Johnson (Bradshaw 87)

Referee Michal Ocenas (Svk) **Attendance** 6,464

President to pariah: The rise and fall of Luis Rubiales

His position could have been stronger than ever but elation exposed him and the fighter could keep fighting no more



Sid Lowe

The way Luis Rubiales told the story, it was a warning. Designed to illustrate how determined he is, *who* he is. He revealed that when he was barely a month old his sister broke his legs. She fell on top of him, causing six or seven fractures on each side, and the doctor told his parents that their son could be anything except a footballer. But that was exactly what he had become and now he was the president of the Spanish football federation so, no, he wasn't going to be beaten this easily. "I'm a fighter," he said.

It was April last year and Rubiales was giving a press conference following the publication of a series of voice notes between him and Gerard Piqué, still playing for Barcelona at the time, which showed how they had taken the Spanish Super Cup to Saudi Arabia - the Supercopa of equality, Rubiales called it. The back and forth between "Geri" and "Rubi", taken from the president's phone and leaked, saw the pressure build and the circle tighten, but he wasn't going to back down, however hard they tried to get him, and he claimed they would stop at nothing.

"I'm a normal guy, 44 years old, from Motril," Rubiales said, during the appearance which did indeed reveal something of who he is, if not always the way he intended. "I don't drink alcohol, I don't smoke. I don't think we'll reach the point when they find me in a ditch, shot in the back of the head, but if they have done this with my mobile, why wouldn't they put things on it? I can't guarantee that tomorrow they won't find a bag of cocaine [planted] in the boot of my car." In the end, it wasn't the cocaine; it was the World Cup. It was the kiss. He pulled this trigger himself.

Just because he is paranoid doesn't mean that they aren't out to get him - "We have to remove Rubiales," La Liga's president, Javier Tebas, says in another recording that was leaked as the war between the two institutions raged. But succeeding was a different question. In October that year, another series of messages published by El Confidencial, this time between Rubiales and his dad, showed the federation president calling Atlético *Patético* and expressing his dislike for Sevilla, Valencia and Villarreal.

Mostly it was inconsequential, although the judge that allowed their publication said they raised questions about Rubiales' impartiality - prompting one columnist to note that there were a million better reasons for him to have been toppled. A million, perhaps not, but in an interview with El País, Rubiales said he had faced 70 or 80 legal cases brought against him. Those were the work of a couple of enemies, he said, and anyway, he had won them all so far.

There were successes, income increasing and budgets expanding, including for women's football, yet also instability. There was the near-collapse of Spain's men's third tier, and the endless, damaging conflict with the league - even if he insisted it was not a conflict but an attack.

The accusations accumulated and Rubiales addressed them all in his own way. Head on, chest out. "I usually wear a cap but these days I am taking it off and walking down the street so everyone can see me," he said, in part because he could. A man who engendered and demanded loyalty, he had support from many inside the clientelist structure of the federation and acquiescence from others, even as he saw potential enemies in many and Tebas's hidden hand almost every time he was challenged. None of those cases, none of the outcry, none of those who opposed him could push him over the edge.

Until now. That unsolicited kiss and Rubiales's horrendous handling of it became the catalyst for change, achieving something other people and other moments did not. "I won't resign," he shouted five times in that now infamous appearance at the assembly in which he addressed his daughters, sitting exposed in the front row, as he railed against "false feminism". But 17 days later, having long since been suspended by Fifa, he finally did.

"It's over," read the hashtag that accompanied the statement from 81 female players, including all 23 who had won the World Cup, and now it is. *Se acabó*. His presidency is anyway, and that is a start; a meaningful shift will require more change. It could have happened sooner. These have been damaging, if ultimately cathartic days, sometimes bordering on the surreal. The kiss started something, a process which brought further detail, more accusations, a different view of the president, more of him coming to light. Tamara Ramos, a former employee, accused Rubiales of asking her what colour underwear she was wearing.



◀ Luis Rubiales' unwanted kiss on Jenni Hermoso finally brought his downfall
NOEMI LLAMAS/EURASIA SPORT IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES



▲ *A woman holds a sign reading "A peck is aggression!" in support of Hermoso*



▶ *Rubiales (left) and Jorge Vilda, former head coach of Spain, bask in Women's World Cup glory*



◀ *Rubiales revealed he was stepping down on Piers Morgan Uncensored*

His uncle Juan Rubiales, formerly his right-hand man at the federation but currently out of favour and locked in a legal battle over his ostracism there, now described him as a man with a tendency towards sexism, left behind by society.

Above all, the days since Sydney brought more actions, more words, from Rubiales: he did more than anyone to change that portrait of him, becoming almost a caricature. Every time he spoke, it got worse. There was the original apology which was not much of an apology, the statement from Jenni Hermoso that wasn't from her at all and the federation's attempt to get Fifa to stand up to the Spanish government, even at the risk of Spanish clubs being kicked out of Europe. Even *that* speech to the assembly was not the last of it. When he went in everyone expected a resignation; instead, there was Rubiales, distilled.

Much of what happened before has been revisited and reevaluated now, the demands from 15 players put in context, their position vindicated. Rubiales' defence of the head coach, Jorge Vilda, sacked last week, has too. The kiss became part of something broader, a cause. Politics and society spoke not just football, which is never just football. "The feminist country advances ever quicker," wrote minister Yolanda Díaz yesterday, after Rubiales' resignation was confirmed. "The transformation and improvement of our lives is inevitable. We're with you Jenni."

There is something in Rubiales saying there are powers against and an irony in how "his" political party moved against him, how he has ended up courting a constituency on the other side of the culture war, far closer to the political predilections of his great rival. There's something somehow fitting about his resignation at last coming via a google doc attached to a tweet, email accidentally revealed, and an interview with Piers Morgan.

In the end, it was inevitable, a matter of time, and yet it took its time. None of those things forced his hand, leaving him ever more isolated. Not the Fifa suspension. Not those who might support him seeing that they could not do so any more, at least not publicly. Not the regional presidents urging him to go. Not the case taken to the court of sporting administration, in an attempt to give the government to the right to remove him. Not his mother locking herself in a church in Motril and going on a hunger strike; not even his mother being taken out of there and to hospital.

Rubiales told Morgan about the pressure on his family but his statement reveals the real reason: the risk to Spain's World Cup bid. The fighter couldn't keep fighting; the damage, bad enough already, would be even greater, and not just in Spain. "Insisting on staying won't contribute anything positive," he conceded. "My departure will contribute to Europe and Africa remaining united for the 2030 World Cup." And so the circle closes.

The grandson of a player, the son of a teacher and a hairdresser, the divorced father of three, Rubiales' own dad was the PSOE mayor of Motril. He qualified as a lawyer but despite the broken legs he did become a footballer. Not a brilliant one, but determined. In his words, a warrior and certainly a leader.

It all started with a World Cup, the man who was less than a month into his presidency sacking Julen Lopetegui two days before Russia 2018, bulldozing through on misplaced pride. It all ended with one, too. Despite everything, from an unwanted coach to 12 absent players, an atmosphere of deep pessimism, Spain were champions this time.

As it turned out, it was the success that caught him. His position could have been stronger than ever, and that realisation continued to weaken him again. All he had to do was, well, nothing. But not only had his team won; so, he was sure, had he and Rubiales is Rubiales, the elation exposing him. He was as good as gone, almost as quickly as Lopetegui had been.

On some level, those moments, start and end, were not so different: the way both crises had unfolded, how he handled them, showed the president as he is. Which is why he ended up having to go and why he wouldn't actually go, Rubiales refusing to depart until the pressure from another World Cup became too great even for him. Insist on continuing, he was told, and 2030, his legacy, his project, would be as dead as he already was.

Analysis
Alex Ibaceta

No apology nor confession – resignation only arrived to protect men's World Cup bid

Luis Rubiales firmly yelled "I'm not going to resign" in his speech at an extraordinary general assembly of Spain's football federation (RFEF) last month, banging a fist on the podium to assert his position. But, 17 days later, he announced his resignation from his position as federation president, as well as vice-president of Uefa. The right decision has been made, but Rubiales is leaving the federation in authoritative fashion after announcing his decision to quit in an interview with Piers Morgan, a clip of which has been posted online prior to their full sit-down being aired today.

The resignation statement released by Rubiales was nothing less than expected. There was no apology, no mention of Jenni Hermoso, the player who he grabbed and kissed during the medal ceremony following Spain's World Cup success in Sydney, no mention of the other players who secured that achievement, and no mention of doing anything wrong.

"I have faith in the truth, and I will do everything in my power so it prevails," he wrote. The attempt is clear – to leave his position as an innocent man who should suffer no further repercussions for his actions.

Rubiales' resignation is not in support or the development of the women's game but rather it is in support of the men's game, and specifically Spain's ambition of hosting the 2030 World Cup. Rubiales' resignation statement pretty much makes that clear.

"There are powers that be that will prevent my return. I do not want Spanish football to be harmed by this disproportionate campaign [against me]," he wrote.

"I make this decision after affirming that my stepping away



▲ *Jenni Hermoso was not mentioned in Luis Rubiales' exit statement*

will contribute to the stability that will allow Europe and Africa to continue together in the dream of 2030, that would bring the biggest event in the world to our country."

In other words – don't think negatively of Spain's male players in light of the negative way I have treated Spain's female players.

Rubiales may not have mentioned Hermoso or any other Spanish female footballer in the clip of his interview with Morgan, or in his resignation statement, but he did mention his daughters. No surprise, really, given this has become a default tactic by Rubiales to defend himself against the "false feminism" that he claims to be a victim of.

"My daughters, my family and the people who love me have suffered the effects of an exaggerated prosecution, and many falsehoods," Rubiales wrote in his statement, and this sort of thing – using his family as a shield and a lever with which to play the victim – expose Rubiales' character in a deeper way than his unsolicited kiss in Sydney does.

Rubiales was suspended by Fifa "from all football-related activities at national and international level" for an initial period of 90 days, but otherwise has, for now, escaped sanctions from football's authorities.

However, he could face legal consequences after Hermoso filed a criminal complaint against him, accusing the 46-year-old of sexual assault. Last week a prosecutor also filed a complaint with Spain's high court against Rubiales, citing concerns that there could be grounds to charge him with sexual assault as well as coercion.

A key question now is what impact Rubiales' decision to step down will have on Spanish football, and specifically Spanish women's football. In resigning, he alluded to only agreeing to do so having been assured that the federation will continue on the course that he set it on during his time in charge. If this is indeed the case then his exit will have the same positive effect as sticking a plaster to the bottom of a sinking ship.

Ultimately the past three weeks or so have been historic for Spanish football and the long-lasting effects of everything that has happened have yet to be fully seen. Rubiales' resignation is a start, but it simply cannot be the end if real change for those who need it – namely women across the country who play football at all levels – is to be achieved.

Football In brief

Ligue 1

Lyon sack Blanc after woeful start to season

Lyon have dismissed their head coach, Laurent Blanc, after a dismal start to the season with the team sitting bottom of the Ligue 1 table. His deputy Jean-François Vulliez has been appointed caretaker, working alongside former Lyon players Jérémie Bréchet and Sonny Anderson. Blanc was appointed in October last year, replacing Peter Bosz and leading the club to a seventh-placed finish in Ligue 1. But the 2023-24 campaign has started disastrously, with Lyon winless and with one point after four games. French media have reported that Gennaro Gattuso is in the frame to replace Blanc. The former Milan and Napoli manager has been out of work since leaving Valencia in January. **PA Media**



▲ *Lyon sacked Laurent Blanc with the team bottom of the Ligue 1*

Women's Nations League

Lionesses to play the Netherlands at Wembley

England will play their home Women's Nations League game against the Netherlands in December at Wembley, it was announced yesterday. The World Cup runners-up welcome the Dutch on Friday 1 December, with the match to be broadcast by ITV, four days before the Lionesses' final game of the year against Scotland at Hampden Park. **Guardian sport**

Manchester City

Suspended sentence for Football Leaks founder

A Lisbon court yesterday gave a four-year suspended prison sentence to Rui Pinto, the Portuguese man behind the Football Leaks website, for attempted extortion, illegal access to data and breach of correspondence. The 34-year-old set up the website in 2015 to share confidential documents. He was arrested in Hungary in January 2019 but later freed from house arrest. The documents provided some of the evidence that led to a ban - since overturned - on Manchester City competing in the Champions League for alleged breaches of Financial Fair Play. **Reuters**

Southampton

Trabzonspor seal loan for £18m Onuachu

Paul Onuachu has joined Trabzonspor on a season-long loan from Southampton. The 29-year-old Nigeria international signed for the Saints from Genk on transfer-deadline day in February for a reported £18m fee. **PA Media**

Results and fixtures

Football

UEFA EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING

Group D

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Croatia	4	3	1	0	9	1	+8	**10**
Turkey	5	3	1	1	8	6	+2	**10**
Armenia	5	2	1	2	8	7	+1	**7**
Wales	5	2	1	2	6	7	-1	**7**
Latvia	5	0	0	5	3	13	-10	**0**

Armenia (0) **0** **Croatia** (1) **1**
Kramaric 14

Latvia (0) **0** **Wales** (1) **2**
Ramsey 29pen, Brooks 90

Group J

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Portugal	6	6	0	0	24	0	+24	**18**
Slovakia	6	4	1	1	8	2	+6	**13**
Luxembourg	6	3	1	2	7	16	-9	**10**
Bosnia-Herzegovina	6	2	0	4	5	9	-4	**6**
Iceland	6	2	0	4	10	9	+1	**6**
Liechtenstein	6	0	0	6	1	19	-18	**0**

Iceland (0) **1** **Bosnia-Herzegovina** (0) **0**
Finnbogason 90

Portugal (4) **9** **Luxembourg** (0) **0**
Inácio 12 45
Ramos 18 34
Jota 58 77, Horta 67
Fernandes 83, Félix 88

Slovakia (3) **3** **Liechtenstein** (0) **0**
Hancko 1, Duda 3
Mak 6

UEFA EUROPEAN UNDER-21 CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING

Group B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Spain	2	2	0	0	7	0	+7	**6**
Hungary	1	1	0	0	2	0	+2	**3**
Belgium	1	1	0	0	1	0	+1	**3**
Scotland	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	**0**
Kazakhstan	2	0	0	2	0	3	-3	**0**
Malta	1	0	0	1	0	6	-6	**0**

Spain 1 Scotland 0; Belgium 1 Kazakhstan 0

Group F

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
England	1	1	0	0	3	0	+3	**3**
Luxembourg	2	1	0	1	1	3	-2	**3**
Azerbaijan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Serbia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Ukraine	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	**0**
Northern Ireland	1	0	0	1	0	1	-1	**0**

Luxembourg 0 England 3

Group H

Slovenia 0 France 4

Fixtures

International matches (7.45pm unless stated)
Germany v France (8pm); Japan v Turkey (1.20pm); Scotland v England

European Championship Qualifying
Group A Norway v Georgia; Spain v Cyprus.
Group C Italy v Ukraine; Malta v North Macedonia.
Group I Israel v Belarus; Romania v Kosovo; Switzerland v Andorra.
Group F Belgium v Estonia; Sweden v Austria

World Cup South American Qualifying
Bolivia v Argentina (9pm); Ecuador v Uruguay (10pm; Venezuela v Paraguay (11pm)

European Under-21 Championship Qualifying
Group One Norway v Latvia (5pm); Republic of Ireland v San Marino (7.30pm); Turkey v Italy (5.45pm).
Group Two Malta v Hungary (4.45pm).
Group Three Moldova v Georgia (5pm); North Macedonia v Netherlands (2.30pm). **Group Four** Bulgaria v Israel (5pm); Estonia v Poland (5pm); Kosovo v Germany (6pm).
Group Five Albania v Romania (5.30pm); Armenia v Montenegro (4pm); Finland v Switzerland (4pm).
Group Six Serbia v Azerbaijan (7pm); Ukraine v Northern Ireland (5.30pm). **Group Seven** Andorra v Greece (6pm); Belarus v Portugal (2pm); Faroe Islands v Croatia (6pm).
Group Eight Austria v Bosnia-Herzegovina (5pm).
Group Nine Iceland v Czech Republic (5.30pm); Lithuania v Wales (4pm)

Papa John's EFL Trophy
Notts County v Wolverhampton U21;
Peterborough v Cambridge Utd (7pm)

Billy's back
Vunipola in line for England return as Curry waits for verdict
Page 32 →



Kiss goodbye
Sid Lowe on the inevitable downfall of Luis Rubiales
Page 36 →



+
'I'll keep playing' Djokovic sets sights on a 25th grand slam title
Page 33 →

The Guardian
Tuesday 12 September 2023

Sport



Harry Kane and Andy Robertson wear unique retro shirts to mark tonight's match between Scotland and England
EDDIE KEOGH/THE FA/GETTY IMAGES

Auld rivals, new chapter
Scotland and England have plenty to prove in 150th anniversary match
Match preview
Pages 34-35 →

Southgate's Pep talk
England manager fires back over Foden position

Jacob Steinberg
Glasgow

Gareth Southgate has defended his reluctance to use Phil Foden in a central role by telling England's critics to ask Pep Guardiola about the Manchester City player's best position.

While Foden had a chance to impress in the middle when he came on during Saturday's draw with Ukraine, he is yet to convince his managers at club and international level that he has the defensive nous to earn a regular spot in his preferred role. Southgate revealed that he has spoken to Guardiola about the 23-year-old, who often plays in a wide role for City, and suggested that one of his most creative players has to improve without the ball.

England's head coach is under pressure to play a more expansive midfield trio after the stodgy performance against Ukraine – he tends to use two ball-winners alongside a more attacking player against top opponents – but he was perplexed by Foden saying that his favourite position is in the centre. "He doesn't [play centrally] for his club," Southgate countered. "Presumably there is a reason for that. It depends on the level of the game. In the middle of the park, everyone wants to talk about the 'with the ball' but there is a lot of detail without the ball. You have to be spot on with pressing angles, your responsibilities and if you don't, you don't get the flow of the game.

"You'd have to speak to Pep, who is the best coach in the world, who plays him from wide. He's always got the freedom to drift if we play him wide. That's important."

Southgate has sought out Guardiola's view on Foden and he rejected the idea that the midfielder has played more centrally for City recently. Foden impressed when he came on for Kevin De Bruyne in last season's Champions League final and there was much excitement about his performance during City's win over Newcastle last month. "The manager told me to play more inside today," Foden said after the game at St James' Park.

Yet Southgate, who said it would be "ridiculous" to play an experimental side in tonight's friendly against Scotland at Hampden Park, insisted Guardiola has not been playing Foden in the middle that much. "I don't think he has played it a lot this season," Southgate said. "Seville in the Super Cup … Newcastle he plays wide right and he drifted – [Erling] Haaland and [Julian] Álvarez as 9 and 10, Phil defended right wing in a 4-4-2. He drifted in off the touchline with [Kyle] Walker going round him in possession. He picked the ball up in those areas a lot but his start position was wide on the right.

"I know it was a really eye-catching game and we were really pleased to see it but

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Pogba could face four-year ban after failed drug test

Andy Hunter

Paul Pogba could be banned from football for up to four years after testing positive for testosterone.

The Juventus midfielder has been provisionally suspended following a random drug test taken after his club's 3-0 win at Udinese on 20 August, Italy's national anti-doping tribunal (NADO Italia) announced on Monday. The test revealed elevated levels of testosterone, a hormone that can increase an athletes' endurance, meaning the 30-year-old's second sample will also need to be examined. Pogba has three days to produce a counter-analysis of the result, according to reports in Italy. If found guilty of doping, the France international could be suspended for between two and four years.

"In acceptance of the instance proposed by the National Anti-doping Prosecutor, it has provided for the provisional suspension of the athlete Paul Labile Pogba," NADO Italia said in a statement. The tribunal said Pogba had violated anti-doping rules when they found the prohibited substance "non-endogenous testosterone metabolites", adding that the results were "consistent with the exogenous origin of the target compounds".

Pogba, who was an unused substitute in the win at Udinese, has endured a torrid time at Juventus following his return to the club from Manchester United in 2022. The 2018 World Cup winner missed most of last season with knee and hamstring injuries. He was also dropped from a Juventus squad for disciplinary reasons and claimed to have almost quit the game after allegedly being blackmailed by an organised crime gang. The midfielder has not started a game this season but has made two substitute appearances.



Paul Pogba has had a torrid time since his departure from United



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My son, father and brother were murdered on the same day – and my younger boy had to tell me



The Guardian

G2

Tuesday 12/09/23

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Chris Ofili
'I had to understand Grenfell'
page 8



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A reality show with real emotions
page 10



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Zoe Williams



Should American bully XL dogs really be banned?

When the Dangerous Dogs Act was passed in 1991, there was a lot of debate about the justice and enforceability of its terms. The pit bull was one of four banned breeds, but it was defined by its appearance and some criteria were loose, others hard to understand. "Its knee joint should be in the upper third of the dog's rear leg, and the bones below that should appear light, fine and springy," was one. Once you have figured out what a springy bone looks like, this could cover an awful lot of dogs. "The dog should have a good depth from the top of head to bottom of jaw and a straight box-like muzzle," was another, which could describe the staffordshire bull terrier and wipe out the sixth most popular breed in the UK. The law never required any suspect to meet the description perfectly; it makes no mention of ears, colour, height or weight.

The upshot is that the American bully XL, all over the news after a series of horrific attacks, is basically already banned, since it's essentially just a pit bull, only bigger. So, Suella Braverman's demand for "urgent advice" on whether to ban the breed may come back with the news that it's unnecessary. If not, she seems set on adding it to the list. This would mean the extermination of what is thought to be several thousand dogs.

The RSPCA has always opposed the Dangerous Dogs Act for exactly this reason: that it takes in a lot of dogs who haven't done anything. But the "deed not breed" argument is vexed by the fact that dogs don't observe a nursery slope of aggression, where they start with something micro and give an owner plenty of warning before they nearly kill someone. Behaviourists talk about a "ladder of aggression", where there are multiple warning signs before a bite, but they move pretty fast up that ladder and the first incident can culminate in the worst one.

> "The law takes in a lot of animals who haven't done anything

The debate leading up to the act always felt to me like a moral panic, as defined in the 70s by Stanley Cohen – "where something or someone is identified as a threat to the values of a society" – and as such ridiculous, since it's a fragile society that can be undone by a creature who will sit for treats. The argument that pit bulls were inherently more aggressive than other breeds was implausible, given that, breed-wise, the highest bite-per-dog is the dachshund. (Yes, obviously, an out-of-control pit bull can do a lot more damage than a dachshund, but then so can a German shepherd, or an Irish wolfhound.)

But it was never only about the dogs – it was also about the owners. When people muttered: "It's not the dogs – it's the owners", it felt heavily class-coded; that these were the types of dogs kept by the wrong type of people. I was reprimanded once when walking my staffy-ridgeback cross on a manicured footpath through the Sussex countryside. When I pointed out that dogs were explicitly allowed, it being a path, the guy said: "Nice dogs. Not dogs like that." In other words, why don't we both push off back to inner-city London?

Sociologists in the US describe something similar but refracted through race, Julie LaBagnara contending that "middle- and upper-class 'white dogs'... receive social allowances that dogs associated with people of colour do not".

Like any debate that is freighted with more than it will say out loud, it takes on an absolutist timbre: "all these dogs are killing machines that must be exterminated" versus "all dogs are born good, but some people shouldn't keep dogs".

Into that context, the American bully XL is the worst possible arrival. There is a good chance that some are born bad, since they are incredibly expensive, yet not recognised by the Kennel Club, which has led to a lot of unregulated overbreeding. They are much too big for anyone inexperienced to control, and the consequences if they turn are so dire as to make finer adjudications about nature versus nurture tragically irrelevant. But there is a path through this that starts with a muzzle order and doesn't go immediately to the gallows.

Why I have my doubts about 'middle-aged Love Island'

People are getting very worked up about ITV's new dating show, My Mum, Your Dad. It has been called the middle-aged Love Island, although Davina McCall, who seem delighted to be presenting it, doesn't like the term "middle aged", preferring "midlife". Sure, "middle aged" has connotations – I think of grey roots and wide shoes – but I have never used the word "midlife" without ending it in "crisis", the same way I can't say "King Charles" without "spaniel".

The obvious flaw in the concept is that surely 80% or 90% of the point is how hot the contestants look in bikinis or tiny shorts. Of course, the maintenance of a 25-year-old physique into your twilight years is a tabloid obsession; if Liz Hurley can do it, then, technically, we all can.

But there will be trade-offs. If you get a bunch of 45-year-olds as buff as young 'uns, there is a good chance they are disciplined. They probably don't drink much. I would venture that they are not impulsive; they defer gratification; perhaps they meditate. I bet they eat a lot of fruit. How on earth you would get such people to make bad decisions is beyond me.

When it comes to the dormitory, unbelievable amounts of verbal traffic will go on how everyone slept. The answer will be "badly", but a lot of texture will go into it: the nature of the disturbances; passive-aggressive allusions to whose fault it was.

Sure, this is what editors are for, but I wonder what will be left. They will talk about their exes a lot, which will also have to be cut, for legal reasons. I am worried that at least one of them will have a hobby such as crochet. They will say very little – and what they do say will give us all a bad name.



Contestants' children on My Mum, Your Dad

Pass notes



№ 4,608

Nomophobia

Age: The term is 15 years old, although the condition is older.

Appearance: Sweaty, anxious, agitated.

It's a fear of something, I gather. Sort of.

Let me see: is it from the Greek *nomos*, a fear of the law or legislature? No, it's panicking about not having your phone.

How does that work? It's short for "no mobile phone phobia".

So it's not even a thing. It may not be a recognised medical term, but it is definitely a thing. As far back as 2008, a study commissioned by the Post Office indicated that 53% of UK mobile users became anxious when they misplaced their phone or lost connectivity.

A country of nomophobes? Yes, although nomophobia isn't a phobia per se – it's more akin to a behavioural addiction or an anxiety disorder.

Is it a very British disease? Not really. A recent study across five Middle Eastern universities found high levels of mobile dependence among students.

What causes nomophobia, then? Well, first and foremost, phones. Mobiles are connected to the internet, making them highly addictive instruments. But it's also possible that nomophobia could be a symptom of another addiction or anxiety.

What are the symptoms? They include trembling, disorientation, tachycardia and changes to your breathing.

Thankfully, I never get any of those, because I am never without my phone for even one second. But what if you lost it, or it was stolen, or it broke, or the battery ran out?

I don't want to talk about that. Do you take your phone to bed with you?

Of course – what if a minor celebrity scandal breaks in the night? Do you look at the screen more than 35 times a day?

Way more – what's the point of having a phone if you don't look at it? Given your answers, you exhibit warning signs of nomophobia.

Is there a cure? It may be treated with cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or exposure therapy, where you gradually get accustomed to spending time without your phone.

I don't like the sound of that one bit. Medication might also play a role, but it wouldn't treat the root cause of your anxiety.

Which is, in other words, my phone. You need to get rid of it.

From my cold, dead hands. Just breathe.

Do say: "Where the hell is my phone?"

Don't say: "I texted my GP about my mobile addiction and now he thinks I'm a homophobe. Damn you, autocorrect!"

COVER: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/THE GUARDIAN

'What the hell have we done?'

Buying a house without ever viewing it in person took off during Covid, and is still popular. **Andy Welch** meets some people who found their dream home this way – and others who weren't so lucky

Jez and Julie, both 62, had a beautiful life in Brittany. The couple had moved there from York in 2000, after retiring from teaching, and had begun to buy, renovate and sell houses to make a living. They lived in a 300-year-old stone farmhouse by a lake.

"My mum died in 1995 when she was only 63," says Jez, who has asked for his surname not to be used. "That gave me a real kick in the pants to do something, which I always say is the best inheritance you'll ever get."

Their nearest neighbour was about a kilometre away and they never thought they would leave this idyllic setup. Then the pandemic hit and everything changed. Jez and Julie started thinking about what would happen if they were to fall ill. They were isolated and travel bans meant no family would have been able to visit to care for them. Julie also wanted to be near her elderly parents in the UK.

"As happened to so many people, the pandemic crystallised our thoughts," recalls Jez. "We umm-ed and ahh-ed, but decided it was essential we came back."

Unable to travel for any viewings, they scoured Rightmove for something suitable and ended up buying a house in Scunthorpe based on pictures alone. They were finally able to move in April 2021, when France relaxed its travel restrictions. But the move back was, as Jez puts it, "traumatic".

"We pulled up outside and my first words were: 'What the hell have we done?' We'd had 20-odd years of being in the middle of nowhere and suddenly we were at the bottom of a small cul-de-sac," says Jez, who is keen to stress there was nothing wrong with the street he lived on and that his neighbours were "very friendly and welcoming".

"When we saw the pictures online, we thought: 'Fine, let's do it,' but when we arrived, I realised how much we'd changed. And, in the 20 years we'd been in France, Britain has changed massively. It's now a 24-hour society, but it wasn't like that when we left. It just didn't feel how I thought it would. It was naive on my part." A year later, Jez and Julie moved to Whitby, still near family, but in a cottage more like their house in France. Crucially, it was a property they had viewed in person several times.

"Never, ever would I do it again," says Jez. "And hopefully there'll never be another time when we'll be forced into doing it."

Considering how stressful it is to buy a house, and the vast sums of money involved, it's hard to understand why anyone would think of buying a place they hadn't visited in person, unless they had no choice because of the distances involved or travel restrictions. But even before Covid changed the world, in-person viewings were falling. In the year to February 2018, 37% of buyers surveyed by the insurer Aviva bought unseen. That figure had risen to 44% by 2019.

Unsurprisingly, the practice increased dramatically during the pandemic lockdowns. Aviva's survey of 2,200 people showed that more than half (58%) of people who bought a house between March 2020 and June 2021 didn't view it in person. But even now, it's still happening more than you might think.

In May, for example, Claire and Thomas moved from Bristol to Kingsbridge in Devon, after buying a house they had only seen in a WhatsApp video. "It was the only thing we could have done," says Claire, 33. "We had a very specific budget and there were maybe four houses for sale we could have chosen. That was it. After one purchase fell through, having ticked all the boxes and been to see it, we just went for it and put an offer in on the biggest house out of those still available. Sometimes in life we can't control all the variables and have to make risky decisions. We think ours paid off."



Lorna and Matthias at the Omeath home they bought unseen in 2020

> **When we saw the pictures online, I thought: let's do it. But it was naive on my part**

Ian Jepson is the branch partner of Michael Graham estate agents in Northampton. He has been selling houses for 34 years and has watched buying unseen grow throughout that time, with technology such as 3D mapping, 360-degree photography and virtual tours making it easier for would-be buyers. Five or 10 years ago, he would have said, like Jez, that no one should ever buy without a physical viewing. "Now, I wouldn't," he says, adding that he can envisage a future where house viewings can be carried out using a VR headset. So long as the buyer and the seller have all the information they need, he says: "Go for it."

That was the approach taken by Lorna Walker, 50, and her partner, Matthias, 51, when buying their home unseen. Research was paramount. They made the decision to leave the UK in the early days of the pandemic and eventually moved into their new house, in Omeath, Ireland, in October 2020. Not only had Lorna and Matthias not seen the place in the flesh, but they had never even been to the part of the country they now happily call home.

"We had been discussing moving to live in the EU ever since Brexit happened," says Lorna, whose dad was Irish. "I have visited various parts of Ireland and Northern Ireland – I studied in Belfast in the early 90s – just not the part I now live in. We more or less stuck a pin in a map."

That pin landed about 500 metres inside Ireland and satisfied almost all of Lorna and Matthias's requirements: halfway between Dublin and Belfast, they live near ferry ports and within range of three airports, making it easy to get back to the UK or to Matthias's native Germany. As soon as they zeroed in on the area, Lorna joined local Facebook groups, followed all the local businesses on social media and found out about the nearest hospitals and supermarkets.

"There's a lot you can learn from Google Maps and the Instagram accounts of nearby cafes," she says. "We had some requirements in what we wanted from the house, the same as anyone does. At that time, there were a lot of options in this area and the estate agent had made a video tour of the house. It used to be a B&B, so there was some information on the internet about that. We were fully aware that the estate agent would dress it up, but we had a survey done, too, which was a little more realistic."

Lorna, who runs a digital marketing agency, says she and Matthias, who works in education, didn't take the decision to do what they did lightly.

"We are not rich people," she says. "This was a very serious financial commitment, not a glib purchase."



58%
of people who bought a house during the pandemic did not view it in person

£494,000
the average cost of a property in south-east England

20 minutes
is the average time spent by buyers in a property before deciding to offer on it



'I'm amazed how well it's all worked out' … Alastair in Edinburgh

They each had a house to sell in the UK before pooling their resources to buy their house in Ireland. "It was a very stressful period, but buying a house always is," she says. "And we were buying in a system that looks very similar to one in the UK, but is subtly different, so we had to adjust to that. But I don't think viewing the house would have made it any more or less stressful than it would have been anyway, buying a house in the middle of a pandemic.

"People buy houses all the time without really getting into the detail," she says. "They might go and look at it, but it's not really due diligence. You spend a small amount of time there, then you say you'll buy it. We did a lot more research than people who buy a house that they've been to."

Claire and Thomas, in Devon, also knew what they were getting into. "We were in a unique position as we were moving back to our home town, so we knew the area and where the house was," says Claire. "I was pleasantly surprised when we finally moved in. I had mentally prepared myself for somewhere that was much rougher around the edges. I think having low expectations meant we were just thrilled to finally move in."

Many studies, meanwhile, show that in-person buyers spend an average of 20 minutes in a property before deciding whether or not to put in an offer - a recent survey by Foxtons reckoned it could be as little as eight minutes. Another study, by HSBC, suggested most people spend far longer than that thinking about what to cook when having friends over for dinner, or deciding which pair of jeans to buy.

Despite speaking to people who have done it successfully, I still don't understand buying a home without viewing it. I live in south-east England, where properties go for an average of £494,000; the idea of spending the best part of half a million quid on something I have never seen in the flesh is baffling. For that kind of money, I would like to see things go the other way - for viewings to include an overnight stay, to let you really suss out the place. Do the pipes make a noise? Is one of the neighbours a soundsystem enthusiast? At the very least, a shower should be permitted: how is that water pressure?

Perhaps, above all else, I would need to know if my potential new home has a weird smell; I wouldn't trust an estate agent to be honest with me about that.

This was the primary concern of Alastair, who bought his flat in lockdown without seeing it. "I remember turning the key in the front door for the first time and thinking: 'Please don't have a smell, please don't have a smell,'" says the 31-year-old web design consultant from Edinburgh. (Luckily, it didn't.)

He met his partner, Tash, a building project manager, in September 2019. In 2020, in the early days of their relationship, they had gone away for a weekend in northern Scotland when Tash was called by a doctor, informing her she had been in contact with one of Scotland's first confirmed Covid cases and that they were required to quarantine.

They retreated to Alastair's one-bed flat, which he owned (Tash was looking to buy somewhere herself). It was during this enforced isolation that they decided that he would sell his place and they would buy somewhere else together.

> **We drove to see it one night to make sure it wasn't a scam. It looked so great on Zoopla**

"We were a serious couple at this point, but it was accelerated massively by the pandemic. That trip was our first weekend away together," he says, adding that none of their parents were yet aware of the relationship. "There was an awkward phone call to my parents that went: 'I've met someone, they might have Covid, so we've got to quarantine together and we're going to buy a flat.'" It worked out, though: more than three years later, they are still renovating the flat they bought in Edinburgh - a property they had only seen pictures of before they moved in.

"Actually, we drove to see it one night to make sure it existed and wasn't a scam," he says. "It looked so great on Zoopla. There was a 360-view camera, so it felt as if we could walk around the place. Combined with a home report, which is done by the seller in Scotland, it meant we had a pretty good idea what it was like. There was no damp; the roof was fine.

"Thinking about it, going around to a house for 10 minutes and then deciding to put your life savings into it seems a bit daft. But I don't know what more we'd have known about the place if we'd been there. What would we have gained?" he says, adding that the flat actually exceeded his expectations.

"I continue to be amazed how well it's all worked out," he says. "I am generally a risk-averse person and this was a very big risk. And it totally paid off."

PHOTOGRAPHS: MURDO MACLEOD/THE GUARDIAN; JOHNNY SAVAGE/THE GUARDIAN

'My son gave me the strength to carry on'

Suzanne Richards lost her father, brother and son in a terrorist attack. She tells **Anita Chaudhuri** about overcoming devastating loss – and helping others to do the same

It was late June in 2015 when tourism lecturer Suzanne Richards arrived home after teaching a class. The house was quiet because the previous evening she had waved her teenage sons, Owen and Joel, off on holiday to Tunisia with her brother Adrian and her father, Pat. "I wasn't allowed to go – it was a 'jolly boys' outing' to celebrate the end of Owen's GCSEs."

That morning, she received a text from Adrian saying they were all sunbathing around the pool. The men had visited the four-star hotel twice before, so they were looking forward to relaxing there, having a few beers and talking about football.

Richards, 54, explains that, after having her two sons, she became a single parent. "My brother, who didn't have children, stepped up and became a role model for his nephews, as did my dad." The four became inseparable and spent every weekend together, united by their love of Only Fools and Horses, card games and their local team, Walsall FC.

"I was just about to make some lunch," recalls Richards via a video call from her home in the West Midlands. "An unknown number flashed up on my phone. Normally I wouldn't answer, but for some reason I did. And that was when I heard Owen screaming: 'There's a gunman and they're all dead!' He was so distressed that I initially couldn't tell which son was speaking. Then we were cut off."

She immediately called the number back but couldn't get through. Messages started pinging from friends and family, asking if she had seen the news, hoping everyone was safe. "It felt like it all happened in the same moment. Owen's phone call, the texts from friends, the news report flashing on my screen.

"I fell to the floor in utter shock. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't comprehend what had just been said to me. I didn't believe it. Didn't understand what he meant. Hoped that it wasn't true. Just every emotion. A day I never want to relive."

At 11.45am that day, on the beachfront at Sousse, 85 miles south of Tunis, 23-year-old Seifeddine Rezgui had taken a Kalashnikov hidden in a parasol and opened fire on sunbathers before entering the Hotel Imperial Marhaba via the pool area and firing at people there. Three members of the Richards family were among the 38 people killed.

Eventually, Richards tried to call her mother, but couldn't get through. "She only lives five minutes away, so I jumped in the car – I don't know how on earth I drove. Then I had to break the terrible news that she had lost her husband, son and grandson. But even as I said the words, I was still living in hope that somehow we had got it wrong, or the news was wrong. Maybe an ambulance had got to them in time."

In the immediate aftermath of the attack, Richards' expertise in tourism proved invaluable. She started her career as a travel agent when she was 16, later switching to lecturing to allow her to work around school holidays. "My biggest concern was for Owen. He was 16 and had just witnessed unimaginable horror. He was injured and out there all alone. I knew I had to get to him."

I fell to the floor in utter shock. I couldn't comprehend what had just been said to me



(From left) Pat, Joel and Adrian on a family holiday in 2014

Through her contacts, she quickly established that the hotel's tour operator, Tui, was sending four rescue planes to Tunisia to evacuate British tourists. "They agreed to let me fly there, so my best friend and I went to East Midlands airport and flew out on an empty plane." She arrived in the early hours of the morning with two jobs to do: find and comfort Owen, and locate the other three.

Reunited with Owen in hospital, after a hug she never wanted to end, she gave him the clothes she had brought with her. "At that point he was still in his swimming trunks. When he realised the others were dead, he fled the hotel with only what he had on."

She then tried to locate Joel, Adrian and Pat's bodies. "The scenes at Tunis morgue were chaotic. Nobody could speak English. I still have nightmares about it." Richards' family liaison officer hadn't been permitted to fly out with her, so she had no one to help manage the situation.

"I think if they had been there, then perhaps I wouldn't have had to see what I saw," she says. "After several hours, my best friend and I were able to identify them." She pauses. "I got through it by going on auto-pilot. I wouldn't wish it on anyone."

Back home, she witnessed an overwhelming outpouring of grief and support from the local community. Walsall FC's ground was a sea of flowers, football tops, scarves and messages. Similar tributes were left at schools attended by the boys, outside Birmingham County Football Association and at the gates of Worcester University, where Joel, 19, had just completed his second year of a sports science degree. "All three of them were so well-known and loved."

A joint funeral was held in West Bromwich three weeks after the attacks. "It's all a bit of a blur," Richards recalls. "But I know that


'I ask myself every day: why did it happen?' Suzanne Richards




Suzanne, Joel and Owen in 2014; with her sons and parents in 2013 (right)



The hardest part of grief is not losing them – it is learning to live without them

there were more than 1,000 people who came to pay their respects, which was absolutely lovely. It was a very public funeral – don't forget that we had also held a [national] minute's silence to mourn those who were killed. But we got fantastic support from West Midlands police and [the charity] Victim Support, helping us cope with TV cameras and photographers everywhere. Losing three generations of the same family made this a very high-profile story."

It was that public interest that helped Richards and Owen move forward after such a seismic loss. "People wanted to do something but they didn't know what, so they sent money or they did fundraisers. So money was coming in to us from everywhere. Thank goodness our postman knows where we live, because some of it was just addressed to the Richards Family, Walsall, or to Joel, Walsall FC."

Richards felt "uncomfortable" about receiving the donations and decided that they needed to channel the money towards others who had lost loved ones to violence. "I set up Smile for Joel [www.smileforjoel.com] as a registered charity with Victim Support, because losing someone to murder is so different to losing a person from an illness. It is deliberate, sudden and traumatic. And it's really hard. So Owen and I wanted to give money to other families to use for something that would be a treat or make their lives easier. It could be anything – a holiday or a garden revamp, new bunk beds or a laptop."

The name of the charity came from the funeral, when some of Joel's friends were giving out wristbands with "Smile Like Joel" (he was known for his cheeky grin) printed on them, together with his motto "together we achieve more". "It just took off from there, really. We changed the name slightly and I designed a logo."

A Facebook group was set up and the charity was launched with a fun run in the local park the following September that raised £27,000. Then things snowballed. Supporters were encouraged to raise awareness by taking selfies wearing the wristbands at tourist sites around the world – a nod to Joel's love of travel. A series of further fundraisers were organised, featuring items from Joel's bucket list, including climbing the O2 dome and a parachute jump.

To date, the charity has helped more than 1,000 family members and raised more than £500,000. It also works with the Foreign Office and the travel industry to highlight holiday safety, especially the issue of hotel security.

In June, Richards was awarded an MBE for her charity work. "I didn't know anything about it! This envelope came through the door marked 'On Her Majesty's Service' and I thought: oh no, a speeding ticket! It's a great honour and I share it with Owen, because we set this up together."

Although they had counselling, Richards says she and Owen believe that you have to learn to manage loss yourself. For her, it is the charity that has kept her going. "It's my medicine. It allows me to talk about Joel, my brother and my dad every single day; keeping their memory alive is so important. It makes me feel connected to them. And paying it forward by helping other families that have been affected like we have also helps. It's such a lovely thing, being able to tell people: yes you can have that holiday in Cornwall; and yes, your daughter can go back to the dance classes she had to stop because you had to stop working after what happened."

What also helps her are the plentiful family photos. "We were very blessed that we spent a lot of time together. Dinner every Sunday, holidays to Mallorca and Lanzarote. One year, we all went to Miami and got stuck there when a volcano in Iceland decided to erupt. Me and the boys celebrated by having a two-week delay in Florida. It's those times now that I look back on and cherish. It's hard to think that I'm never going to get any new photographs – but thank God I have so many memories."

She tries to live life to the full. "It's a cliche maybe, but I've realised that life is short and you only get one chance at it." Still, she says: "I do ask myself every day: why did it happen? What has [the shooter] gained from doing that apart from ripping 38 families apart? I don't get it and I never will get it. I have also realised that time doesn't heal you. All that time does is give you the strength to manage it better. The hardest part of grief is not losing them – it is learning to live without them."



Suzanne and Owen supporting Smile for Joel in 2022

On the day we speak, it would have been her parents' 60th wedding anniversary. But her mother died in 2018. "She really struggled. She was in her 70s and had lost her only son, her grandson and her husband. It made her so ill that three years later I had to bury her in the same grave."

Despite what happened, Owen, who is now 24, hasn't been put off travelling and is currently in Australia. "I want him to do it. But for me, it is quite lonely. Today we should be celebrating as a family. I have one son on the other side of the world and the other three are up in heaven."

Richards was brought up Roman Catholic, but says she would rather not be drawn on her spiritual beliefs. "I live for the fact that I'm going to see them again. If I knew that I wasn't going to see them again, that would be a struggle, so I choose to live with the fact that I will. I hope that they are watching us and everything we are doing."

We are saying our goodbyes when Richards asks me a question. "This article is about how we survive. What are you going to say about me? How do you think I have survived?" I mumble something incoherent about the Smile for Joel charity being at the heart of the matter.

She cuts in. "No, no, I must correct you. I survived, and I get through what happened on a daily basis, for one reason: it's because Owen survived. It could have been worse. I could have lost all four of them. Owen surviving gave me the strength to carry on. How would I have coped if I had lost all of them? Maybe we wouldn't be having this conversation."

PHOTOGRAPHS: CHRISTOPHER THOMOND/THE GUARDIAN


'I wanted to be sincere and outrageous' … Chris Ofili

'I want this to hit people in the gut'

Chris Ofili has finally chosen to address Grenfell - with an epic fresco depicting a flaming building, fleeing souls and an ocean of tears. He tells **Gary Younge** about the woman at its swirling centre


Wake-up call … Requiem covers three walls and will last 10 years

In May 2017 Chris Ofili was at a gathering on the Lido in Venice, following the opening of an exhibition, when he was told a young artist wanted to meet him. Ofili, 54, cuts a lean, muscular figure, but with more salt than pepper in his hair, he is feeling his years professionally. "When you get to this age you're a little bit disconnected from the younger group," he says. "And I thought, 'That's really nice. Somebody would actually formally like to meet me.'"

In the near distance, he saw 24-year-old Khadija Saye, whose work was being exhibited at the Biennale with other emerging artists as part of the Diaspora Pavilion. "She had this really radiant presence," recalls Ofili. "There was an undeniably genuine, honest presence about her. And I said yeah, of course I want to meet her. We did a brief selfie and maybe exchanged a few words. But it was enough to realise, 'That's a good person there and I hope she makes really good art, because that combination can be quite special.'"

Saye was, in fact, on the brink of a breakthrough with a haunting photographic series called Dwelling: In This Space We Breathe. "It turns out she made quite extraordinary, mystical, alchemic self-portraits and works fusing her history and the history of photography," says Ofili. "This work that reached into the past but also went into the future."

Just over a month later Saye was dead. She lived with her mother, Mary Mendy, on the 20th floor of the inflammable tomb and now charred monument to corporate disgrace, otherwise known as Grenfell Tower, where 72 people died in a fire. Saye had no phone to call for help - the police had taken it during a wrongful arrest - so she took to Facebook to ask for prayers and advice as she struggled to escape through the thick smoke.

A couple of days later, Ofili was back in his studio in Trinidad when he heard Saye had passed away. "At that point the fire was still burning," he says. "I remember thinking, 'What?' I didn't really understand what you're supposed to do with the loss of somebody that young who had such huge potential."

Today, in a piece by Ofili called Requiem, an image of Saye hovers high on the middle wall of Tate Britain's northern staircase. Emerging from a cluster of yellow and orange, encircled by the souls of the perished, she holds to her ear an *andichuari*, a Gambian incense pot and treasured possession of her mother. It is a depiction based on one of Saye's own photographs, currently exhibited at Tate Modern, also to be shown alongside Requiem.

Entering the staircase from the top, passing through opaque doors, one's immediate impression is of riotous reverence. Just beneath the apex, Saye appears as though from a stained glass window in a passageway dominated by arresting purples and blues. To the left, a prophet or witness bows, his dark robes aglow in the light of the flaming building he is presenting. Tears fall from his face into an ocean of despair from which souls are trying to escape.

To the right, a flute-playing, satyr-like figure rests beneath the lilac shade of a Ceanothus Concha (the same tree that sits in a garden dedicated to Saye in east London where she once worked). It lures the souls towards it with its melody as blossoms float across the canvas. The effect reminded me of the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, where a stained glass window bearing the image of a black Christ - funded and created as a gift from the people of Wales after Klansmen bombed the church and killed four little girls after Sunday school in 1963 - is visible from the pulpit. If approaching the work from the bottom of the staircase,

> **I was conscious that whenever I passed Grenfell, I looked away. But this luxury has expired**



On the brink of a breakthrough … Andichurai by Khadija Saye

you ascend, as though underwater, through the calmer blues of the tear-soaked stream in which the souls swim, to become enveloped in more vivid colour and clearer narrative.

Requiem stands on its own, but is nonetheless pulled together by threads from Ofili's significant body of work. There's the witness, who also features prominently in Poolside Magic; his tears, echoing No Woman No Cry; the satyr, a constant feature of The Seven Deadly Sins. When the Tate originally offered Ofili the space for a new commission, which will stand for at least 10 years, he was sceptical. "The space felt awkward," he says. "It felt dated. It felt like the last kind of place I would want to make a piece of art: a thoroughfare. It didn't feel like it had any central focus."

Thinking back to similar opportunities he's had, particularly at Tate, he reflected on No Woman No Cry, a tribute to the murdered teenager Stephen Lawrence, whose image appears in each tear; and more recently Blue Devils, which addressed stop and search. "I thought OK, stay in that vein. Try and think of something that would address the public and the hundreds of thousands of people coming through here."

Quite what that thing would be eluded him for some time. It wasn't until he was in a car heading into central London from Heathrow, following another Venice trip, that it dawned on him that every time he passed Grenfell he looked away. "This time I was really conscious that I was looking away. So I looked at it again and started having these horrible thoughts about Khadija being in that building. And that's when I thought, 'Right, I really have to try and address Grenfell because this luxury of looking away, and packing away those thoughts, has expired. But I knew it was a very vulnerable and tender subject, where you could do more damage than good. And I felt that if I was going to address it, I was going to have to understand it."

He delved into the literature and testimony that emerged from the tragedy, but ultimately came back to that evening in Venice. "I thought my entry could be through the one person that I think I knew in the building who lost a life. And if I went in that way, I could keep it personal and not be too broad."

He then set about his artistic research, visiting churches and chapels in Padua, studying the work of 13th-century painter and architect Giotto di Bondone. Focusing on frescoes, he felt a particular responsibility because the work would be up on a wall for at least a decade. "It's important at times to use skill and platform to say something that's beyond words, really. I think this is beyond words. You can't talk for 10 years, but somebody can look at something and have their own personal responses in 10 years' time."

The space was altered in a range of ways to accommodate his vision, which in turn used the space quite differently to the painting by David Tremlett that preceded it.

Raised in Manchester to Nigerian parents, Ofili has lived primarily in Trinidad since 2005, but zigzagged across "the black Atlantic", spending much of his time in London and New York. Referring to the diasporic connections made through colonialism and slavery, he says: "No matter what their plan was when they went over to conquer, there's another potential of how we can stay connected and use and exchange ideas. I'm determined to keep that callaloo mixture authentically mine. Not a generalised version. This is actually my dish. This is the way I make it. We work with what we've got."

When I interviewed him 13 years ago at his studio in the hills overlooking Port of Spain, he explained why he avoided polemic in his art. "A lot of black art that came before was set up to critique the system. I thought that was boring. Basically, you would have to be right all the time. And I was not interested in being right all the time. I wanted to be sincere and outrageous and friendly and rude and experimental and conventional. I just wanted to try to be who I am."

This informed his approach to Requiem. "I could get so much wrong if I was relying only on facts. But if I could stay in an emotional place, then there's no right and wrong, it's just connection to self, and I knew I was equipped in my emotional response. Because that's a lot to work with. I want this to hit people in the gut. The only way to do that is to say, 'Wake up, wake up!'" He clicks his fingers as though to stir someone from their slumber.

This preventable fire signalled the dominance in British life, and death, of the four horsemen of late-stage capitalism: inequality, austerity, deregulation and privatisation. Six years later, with the official inquiry still in progress and nobody yet held accountable, a body of artistic work is building in response. In the last five months alone there have been Steve McQueen's film and Gillian Slovo's play at the National Theatre, both titled Grenfell. What was it about tragedy, I ask Ofili, that has made it such a touchstone? "It was the direct by-product of a system," he says. "And we have to ask ourselves, 'What set things up to allow these things to happen? Because human beings did this: there was no AI involved.'"

Chris Ofili's Requiem is on show at Tate Britain, London, from today

PHOTOGRAPHS: DAVID LEVENE/THE GUARDIAN; THIERRY BAL/© CHRIS OFILI COURTESY THE ARTIST; THE ESTATE OF KHADIJA SAYE

The Juliet Letters by Elvis Costello and the Brodsky Quartet

'The songs – which were inspired by letters sent to "Juliet Capulet in Verona" – have been covered many times. Björk's version of Why? is better than ours'



'They were incredibly patient' … Elvis Costello (second from right) and the quartet in 1993

PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL MASSEY/REX FEATURES

Elvis Costello
Singer, co-writer/arranger

When I wasn't on the road I would go five or six days a week to classical concerts. The Brodsky Quartet were playing the complete Shostakovich quartets in London one season and I went to hear them all. After one lunchtime concert, I met the group and we got on immediately. We discovered a shared love of football and cake. We started talking about doing something together as a quintet – something other than just attaching a string quartet to a pop song like a varnish.

It was my then partner who pointed out the story to me in the Guardian, about letters sent to "Juliet Capulet" in Verona. It caught my imagination – it seemed magical and fanciful, and that became our starting point, songs that were different types of letters.

Most of my listening was classical and jazz: music not driven so much by the beat but by harmony and texture. We all contributed ideas, music, lyrics and arrangements. Up to that point I had always composed by ear, so for the first few weeks I would play something on the piano or sing the parts and the quartet would transcribe it. I'm not that reliable a pianist and I would often play things slightly differently each time. They were incredibly patient.

After a while I was shamed into getting to grips with learning how to read and write music – I needed to learn the relationship between the bass and the treble clef, which had always been a mystery. It was like a door opening and, by the end of our writing, my final compositions were written in full for each player, directly from my head.

There was a kind of panic about the record initially. What is it? What is it about? We had to accept that some people either wanted it to be Oliver's Army or Bartók. There's a common assumption that anything you do that isn't what you did first must be hubris. I don't do things to say: "How do I look doing this?" That's too much work. You have to be doing it with your whole heart otherwise why bother?

The Juliet Letters has become a repertoire piece. It's been translated into different languages. There's a reorchestrated version for a cabaret band. I've seen an adaptation in Gothenberg where the songs were wound into a narrative. It's been made into a piece of contemporary dance, and the songs have been covered many times. Björk's version of Why? is better than mine!

Jacqueline Thomas
Cellist, co-writer/arranger

People were asking: "Did you see who was in your audience?" We knew and loved Elvis's music and had been to his concerts. Like us, he was on Warner and the record company arranged for us to meet. We realised we had all kinds of musical interests in common. Our world is one where we play other people's music – an amazing array of repertoire – but you don't often get to write your own.

The concept of letters came up quickly. We made lists of different types, from love letters to circulars, pyramid letters to suicide notes. And we swapped mix tapes. It wasn't just Elvis sending us pop songs and us sending him chamber music: we had similar tastes and inspirations from across many musical worlds. Within a few days we were scribbling down ideas. One of us might come in with a fragment – just a line – while another might have a complete chorus, or someone else a texture out of which the song would grow. About 50% of the original material was Elvis's, the other half was us.

The first performance was at the Amadeus Centre in London. People didn't believe Elvis was turning up to this 250-seater church in Maida Vale to perform with us – it was probably the only time the venue had had to deal with ticket touts.

People from both our worlds were shocked. We risked being considered not serious, and Elvis faced similar biases. So the world tour was incredibly short compared to most album promo tours, at just one month. At the end of the American leg, the head of the record company came over and said: "Why didn't you tell us it was going to be so great? Sales have exceeded all expectation. We could have done two more months in the US alone!" We tried to tell you, we said.

Interviews by Imogen Tilden. A 30th anniversary edition of the score, edited by Jacqueline Thomas and Paul Cassidy, is published on Friday



First dates … Clayton and Sharon in My Mum, Your Dad

Review My Mum, Your Dad, ITV

Love Island with real emotions? What an unusual idea …

★★★★☆

Lucy Mangan



ITV's new reality show My Mum, Your Dad has been billed as "a middle-aged Love Island". It could have been titled Love Handles Island, but we live in times too tremulous and fearful for such humour to be countenanced. A wasted opportunity, for sure, but the show manages to grasp other opportunities offered by the casting of reality contestants who have got a bit of reality under their belts before being ushered on to our screens to live a heightened version of it for 10 episodes.

Set in a "stunning countryside retreat", it's overseen by the middle-aged-but-with-invaluable-cross-generational-appeal-that-must-have-ITV-execs-weeping-with-gratitude Davina McCall. No one does it better - and in this case I suspect no one else could do it at all.

The setup is familiar, even if you haven't seen the US and Australian versions. Four single mums and four single dads have been nominated by their adult children to enter a show in which they are hoping to find love. The twist is that the kids are - unbeknown to the parents - watching everything from a surveillance room.

It was unbeknown to the kids until the last minute, too; the horrified expressions when McCall tells them are a sight to behold. "Do we have any sickbags?" asks one, speaking for all. Poor bairns. It sends a shudder down my spine, too. Nobody wants to see their parents in flirt mode, and nobody wants to see someone see their parents in flirt mode, either. By the end of the first episode, things are still bearable, but I can see it easily becoming excruciating as "connections" - the euphemism flying around - are made.

Still, it soon becomes clear that, unlike Love Island, humiliation and hate-watching are not the goals here. Unlike the usual contestants, these people have real stories, real baggage and, as a consequence - get this! - real emotions. I have screamed and vomited while watching the plasticised Love Islanders press their bronzed bits against each other and try to form thoughts then words that match them, but My Mum, Your Dad is full of genuinely poignant (and genuinely funny - as when one of the dads wants to know if Davina is "off the table") moments that had me laughing and crying more than once.

As ever when real-real people are involved, the division between the sexes is fascinating. The women's histories are largely composed of unfaithful-and-worse men, a subsequent lack of self-esteem and an unwillingness to hurl themselves back into the dating pool now that they have accumulated so much empirical evidence that it is not worth it. Their sons and daughters have generally sent them in with instructions to break the pattern: "'My type' has not served me well in the past." Oh God, I hope the vetting has been beyond rigorous …

The men seem mostly just not to have got around to settling down yet. The notable exception is Roger, who was widowed only a year ago after being with his wife for nearly 40 years. His children nominated him as a way of showing that they would be happy if he started looking for someone new. He is handsome and charming and clearly still heartbroken. If he is ready for another relationship, I am a perky-breasted twentysomething.

By the end of the first episode, they have all been forcibly paired up and sent on a date. Ebullient Clayton charms the quieter Natalie. Quick-witted and kindly Elliott is gentle and gentlemanly with sweet Sharon. Monique does her best with patently nervous Paul. And lovely Caroline listens while Roger tells her about his wife's death and the love between her and their daughter. "I used to just get a drink and watch them and think: wow." Tears fill Caroline's eyes as I howl unashamedly on the sofa.

The difference between My Mum, Your Dad and Love Island - indeed, between it and almost all other reality shows - is that it is fundamentally kind. The people are fundamentally decent - or at least they seem to be so far, which is more than you can say of most reality shows. It feels more like balm than a harrowing of the soul in pursuit of social media buzz and other low-denomination rewards. And, while representation of different demographics is always laudable and welcome, it is this for which I feel most grateful.

What's On
Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Storyville: Benjamin, Joshua and the Crown Shyness
10pm, BBC Four



This peculiar, semi-structured documentary from the Italian director Valentina Bertani follows identical twins, Benjamin and Joshua Israel. After finishing school, the larger-than-life characters, who have learning disabilities, navigate the start of adulthood - and all the highs and lows that brings - in their own ways, while maintaining their unbreakable bond.
Hollie Richardson

Living Next Door to Putin
8pm, BBC One
Starting in Poland - which has become the gateway to Ukraine, with an airport full of Patriot air defence missiles - the BBC's Europe editor, Katya Adler, tours Russia's neighbour to see how its citizens are living with war on their doorstep. Here, seeing tanks every day has become normal. **HR**

The Following Events Are Based on a Pack of Lies
9pm, BBC One
Yes, this revenge tale of a woman taking on her conman ex-husband is a propulsive, twisty potboiler. But, when Alice and her new ally, Kelly, are nigh-on paralysed by the lingering effects of their abusive past relationships, this week's episode proves the series is not willing to prioritise action over putting victims' trauma in the spotlight.
Alexi Duggins

Stranger in My Family
9pm, BBC Three
A remarkable story of familial resilience emerges from Luke Davies's search for his biological father. Davies grew up in Rochdale and always felt as if he was an outsider in his family. Eventually, a DNA test exposes secrets. This moving film reveals a deep well of patience, forgiveness and redemption.
Phil Harrison

Henpocalypse!
10pm, BBC Two
If a killer virus ravaged the UK, would you rather scrape by in a trashed Welsh farmhouse or luxuriate in a Lord-of-the-Rings-style fantasy life with Danny Dyer? For feverish bridesmaid Jen (Kate O'Flynn), it's the latter, as the enjoyably bawdy comedy about a feral Brummie hen do accelerates toward its finale.
Graeme Virtue

Selling Super Houses
10.15pm, Channel 4
More real-estate escapades in the world of top-end property, as Paul "PK" Kemsley tasks his agents with producing an enticing video tour for two superprime houses. Then, after a high-stakes networking lunch, PK must choose one of the losing agents to send home - no doubt to a markedly less luxe abode.
Ellen E Jones

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Morning Live (T) **10.0** Critical Incident (T) (R) **10.45** Expert Witness (T) (R) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) (R) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Doctors (T) **2.15** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) **3.45** Garden Rescue (T) **4.30** The Finish Line (T) **5.15** Pointless (T) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** EastEnders (T)

8.0 **Living Next Door to Putin** (T) Part one of two. Katya Adler travels along the Russian border to investigate Putin's war on the west.
9.0 **The Following Events Are Based on a Pack of Lies** (T) Alice discovers new evidence in her case against Rob which, unbeknown to her, forces his hand.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **Ellie Simmonds: A World Without Dwarfism?** (T) (R) The swimmer investigates a controversial drug for children with dwarfism.
11.40 **Boot Dreams: Now Or Never** (T) (R) Anton Ferdinand trains the squad.
12.40 **Weather** (T) **12.45** News (T)

BBC Two

6.30 **Bargain Hunt** (T) (R) **7.15** Garden Rescue (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Expert Witness (T) (R) **8.30** Robson Green's Weekend Escapes (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **10.0** News (T) **12.15** Politics Live (T) **1.0** The Super League Show (T) (R) **1.45** Impossible (T) (R) **2.30** Eggheads (T) (R) **3.0** The Wonder of Animals (T) (R) **3.30** Great British Railway Journeys (T) (R) **4.0** Who Do You Think You Are? (T) (R) **5.0** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Tales from a Kitchen Garden (T) **7.0** Coastal Defenders (T)

8.0 **This Farming Life** (T) The MacDonalds walk their 150 pregnant Highland cattle from North Uist to the tidal island of Vallay, which is accessible by foot for only a six-hour window.
9.0 **Ultimate Wedding Planner** (T) The final two planners face the ultimate challenge. Last in the series.

10.0 **Henpocalypse!** (T) Zara finds herself in turmoil over Gary.
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.15 **Women's ODI Cricket** (T)
11.45 FILM **The Two Faces of January** (2014) (T) Thriller.
1.15 **Sign Zone** Money for Nothing (T) (R) **2.0** Celebrity MasterChef (T) (R) **3.0** Garden Rescue (T) (R) **3.45** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.30** News and Weather (T) **1.55** Local News and Weather (T) **2.0** James Martin's Spanish Adventure (T) **3.0** Tenable (T) **4.0** Tipping Point (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.30** Emmerdale (T)

8.0 **Love Your Garden** (T) Alan Titchmarsh and the team head to the town of Hinckley to surprise 96-year-old second world war veteran Gordon with a stunning garden transformation.
9.0 **My Mum, Your Dad** (T) Davina heads into the retreat to see how the grownups are getting on.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.30 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 FILM **Casino Royale** (1967) (T) Spoof adventure, starring David Niven, Peter Sellers and Woody Allen.
1.0 **My Mum, Your Dad** (T) (R) **1.50** Starstruck (T) (R) **2.55** Tenable (T) (R) **3.45** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.0** Spanish Adventure (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Chateau DIY (T) (R) **10.55** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** A Place in the Sun (T) (R) **5.0** Four in a Bed (T) (R) **5.30** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **6.0** News (T)

7.0 **Live International Football** (T) Scotland v England (kick-off 7.45pm). All the action from the 150th anniversary heritage match at Hampden Park. Jules Breach presents, with analysis from Joe Cole, Jill Scott and Graeme Souness.

10.15 **Selling Super Houses** (T)
11.20 **Gogglebox** (T) (R)
12.20 **Football Highlights** (T) **1.15** Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back (T) (R) **2.05** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **3.0** Screw (T) (R) **3.55** Undercover Boss USA (T) (R) **4.45** Location, Location, Location (T) (R) **5.40** Beat the Chef (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.40** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Twisted House Sitter (Courtney Miller, 2021) (T) **4.0** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Susan Calman's Grand Day Out (T) (R) **7.0** Ikea: How Do They Really Do It? (T) (R)

8.0 **The Yorkshire Vet** (T) David Melleney and Rohin Aojula team up to try to save a cow and her unborn calf.
9.0 **The Great Flood of '07** (T) An account of the devastating floods in 2007 that caused havoc and widespread damage across the UK during the wettest summer since records began.

10.30 **Motorway Cops** (T) (R)
11.30 **Shoplifters & Scammers: At War With the Law** (T) (R)
12.25 **Traffic Cops** (T) (R) **1.20** Live Casino Show (T) **3.20** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun (T) (R) **4.10** Get Your Tatts Out (T) (R) **4.55** Nick's Quest (T) (R) **5.20** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.50** Milkshake! (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Secret Life of Farm Animals** (T) (R) Why pigs are intelligent and masters in the art of deception.

8.0 **Great Coastal Railway Journeys** (T) (R) Michael Portillo reaches Mallaig.
8.30 **Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em** (T) (R) Classic comedy.
9.0 **Yes Minister** (T) (R) Jim Hacker is furious Humphrey is withholding information.
9.30 **The Thick of It** (T) (R) The media decide Nicola could be a challenger.

10.0 **Storyville: Benjamin, Joshua and the Crown Shyness** (T) Documentary about a pair of Israeli twins with a learning disability.
11.35 **The Violence Paradox** (T) (R)
12.30 **Parkinson** (T) (R) **1.30** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (T) (R) **2.0** Invasion! With Sam Willis (T) (R) **3.0** Secret Life of Farm Animals (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three
7.0pm The Blue Planet **8.0** Top Gear America **8.35** Ghosts US **8.55** Loop **8.55** The Catch Up **9.0** Stranger in My Family **10.0** FILM The Evil Dead (1982) **11.25** FILM Host (2020) **12.20** Stranger in My Family **1.20** Boot Dreams: Now Or Never **2.20** Dubai Hustle **2.50** Stranger in My Family

Dave
6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Scrapyard Supercar **8.0** Top Gear **9.0** DIY SOS: The Big Build **10.0** Exploration Volcano **11.0** Rick Stein's Road to Mexico **12.0** Storage Hunters UK **12.30** Storage Hunters UK **1.0** Sin City Motors **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** Australian Ninja Warrior **5.30** Rick Stein's Italian Escape **6.0** Rick Stein's Long Weekends **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** House of Games **8.20** Would I Lie to You? **9.0** QI XL **10.0** Have I Got a Bit More News for You **11.0** Have I Got a Bit More Old News for You **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** Would I Lie to You? **1.20** Alan Davies: As Yet Untitled **2.30** House of Games **3.0** Live at the Moth Club **4.0** Teleshopping

E4
6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **9.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** The Big Bang Theory **12.30** The Big Bang Theory **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Goldbergs **2.30** The Goldbergs **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Young Sheldon **7.30** Young Sheldon **8.0** First Dates Ireland **9.0** Celebs Go Dating **10.0** Gogglebox **11.05** Naked Attraction **12.10** Cruel Summer **1.10** First Dates **2.10** Celebs Go Dating **3.05** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **3.55** The Goldbergs **4.20** The Goldbergs **4.45** Black-ish **5.10** Black-ish

Film4
11.0am FILM The Last Hurrah (1958) **1.25** FILM The Yellow Balloon (1953) **3.05** FILM Red Mountain (1951) **4.45** FILM True Grit (1969) **7.20** FILM Table 19 (2017) **9.0** FILM Lion (2016) **11.20** FILM Hancock (2008) **1.05** FILM Ping Pong (1986)

ITV2
6.0am CITV: Craig of the Creek **6.10** Teen Titans Go! **6.50** DC Super Hero Girls **7.05** Looney Tunes Cartoons **7.20** Jurassic World Camp Cretaceous **7.45** Be Cool, Scooby-Doo! **8.10** What's New Scooby-Doo? **8.35** Scooby-Doo and Guess Who? **9.0** One Tree Hill **10.0** Dawson's Creek **11.0** Love Bites **12.0** Dinner Date **1.0** Family Fortunes **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Family Fortunes **8.0** Superstore **8.30** Superstore **9.0** Gordon, Gino and Fred: American Road Trip **10.15** Plebs **10.45** Plebs **11.15** Family Guy **11.45** Family Guy **12.15** American Dad! **12.45** American Dad! **1.15** Superstore **1.40** Superstore **2.05** Celebrity Karaoke Club **2.55** Unwind With ITV **3.0** Teleshopping **5.0** The Epic Tales of Captain Underpants **5.25** Scooby-Doo! Mystery Incorporated **5.45** Craig of the Creek

Sky Max
6.0am Supergirl **7.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **8.0** The Flash **9.0** Stargate Atlantis **11.0** Supergirl **12.0** The Flash **1.0** NCIS: Los Angeles **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** S.W.A.T **5.0** DC's Legends of Tomorrow **6.0** Stargate Atlantis **8.0** The Ultimate Romcom Movies **9.0** A Discovery of Witches **10.0** FILM Homefront (2013) **12.0** An Idiot Abroad **1.0** The Blacklist **2.0** Never Mind the Buzzcocks **2.45** Road Wars **3.15** Hawaii Five-0 **4.05** S.W.A.T **5.0** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts
6.0am Son of Cornwall **8.0** The Joy of Painting **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Helen Mirren **12.0** The Joy of Painting **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** Inside Art: Bristol Street Art at M Shed **3.0** The Art of Architecture **4.0** Discovering: Vanessa Redgrave **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** The Joy of Painting **7.30** The Joy of Painting **8.0** Discovering Westerns on Film **9.30** Comedy Legends **10.30** Discovering: The Monkees **11.0** The Lot of Fun: Where the Movies Learned to Laugh **12.0** Dr Jack and Mr Nicholson **1.0** Soundtracks: Songs That Defined History **1.50** Discovering: U2 **2.20** Berlin Live: Simple Minds **3.40** Simple Minds: Music Icons **4.10** A Play in a Day **5.10** The South Bank Show Originals **5.35** The South Bank Show Originals

Sky Atlantic
6.0am The Guest Wing **7.55** The Leftovers **10.05** Ray Donovan **12.05** Game of Thrones **1.10** This England **3.35** The Leftovers **5.50** Ray Donovan **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** The Lovers **9.40** Billions **10.45** The Gilded Age **11.55** Drift: Partners in Crime **12.55** Domina **4.10** The Guest Wing


The Two Faces of January, BBC Two

Radio

Radio 3
6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Carlos Chávez (2/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. Leif Ove Andsnes and Bertrand Chamayou perform chamber music for four hands and one piano by Schubert and Kurtág. **2.0** Afternoon Concert. Includes two musical interpretations of the Don Quixote story, and James MacMillan's Miserere. **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. Ryan Wigglesworth conducts the BBC SSO and soprano Jennifer France in Helen Grime's Virga, Hans Abrahamsen's Let Me Tell You, Elizabeth Ogonek's As Though Birds and Mark-Anthony Turnage's Three Screaming Popes. **10.0** Free Thinking. Rana Mitter talks to the six authors shortlisted for the Wolfson prize 2023. **10.45** The Essay: Unearthing Britannia's Tribes. Caradoc Peters reveals a formative period of Cornwall's past that still resounds. (R) **11.0** Night Tracks **12.30** Through the Night

Radio 4
6.0am Today **8.31** (LW) Yesterday in Parliament **9.0** The Life Scientific. Paul Murdin talks about the need for imagination in astronomy. (6/7) **9.30** One to One. Nikki Bedi meets Lauren Zalaznick. (6/7) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Adam Smith – What He Thought and Why It Matters (2/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **11.0** The Archbishop Interviews: Nick Cave (R) **11.30** Three Faces of WH Auden. Michael Symmons Roberts considers three aspects of the poet's body of work (1/3) **12.0** News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** Call You and Yours **12.57** Weather **1.0** The World at One **1.45** The Immortals. Aleks Krotoski speaks to Vitalik Buterin about his work on longevity. (7/10) **2.0** The Archers (R) **2.15** This Thing of Darkness. Drama, by Anita Vettesse. (5/7) (R) **3.0** The Kitchen Cabinet (R) **3.30** BBC National Short Story Award 2023 (2/5) **4.0** Moving Pictures: The Campo Santo, Venice by Turner (R) **4.30** Great Lives: Lady Eve Balfour (7/9) **5.0** PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** Weather **6.0** News **6.30** Suggs: Love Letters to London (R) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Front Row **8.0** File on 4 (3/3) **8.40** In Touch **9.0** Is Psychiatry Working? A live episode from the Hay festival. **9.30** The Life Scientific (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime :The Exhibitionist (7/10) **11.0** Call Jonathan Pie. Pie tries to prove his non-racist credentials. (4/10) **11.30** Today in Parliament **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (R) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Farming Today **5.58** Tweet of the Day (R)

Radio 4 Extra
6.0am The Three Musketeers (1/6) **6.30** Berkely Mather: The Hard Buy (6/8) **7.0** Casanova in London (2/5) **7.15** Agnes Grey (2/5) **7.30** Showstopper (1/6) **8.0** The Goon Show (10/17) **8.30** Little Blighty on the Down (4/5) **9.0** The Motion Show (1/6) **9.30** No Commitments (6/6) **10.0** The Psychedelic Spy (2/5) **10.45** Short Works **11.0** The Three Musketeers (1/6) **11.30** Berkely Mather (6/8) **12.0** Casanova in London (2/5) **12.15** Agnes Grey (2/5) **12.30** Showstopper (1/6) **1.0** The Goon Show (10/17) **1.30** Little Blighty on the Down (4/5) **2.0** The Motion Show (1/6) **2.30** No Commitments (6/6) **3.0** The Psychedelic Spy (2/5) **3.45** Short Works **4.0** The Three Musketeers (1/6) **4.30** Berkely Mather (6/8) **5.0** Casanova in London (2/5) **5.15** Agnes Grey (2/5) **5.30** Showstopper (1/6) **6.0** The Goon Show (10/17) **6.30** Little Blighty on the Down (4/5) **7.0** The Motion Show (1/6) **7.30** No Commitments (6/6) **8.0** TED Radio Hour (47/48) **8.50** Inheritance Tracks **9.0** Mastertapes (6/12) **9.30** Eye of the Cricket (7/10) **10.0** Suggs: Love Letters to London (1/4) **10.30** Alice's Wunderland (4/4) **11.0** Meet David Sedaris (3/6) **11.30** Think the Unthinkable (5/6) **12.0** The Psychedelic Spy (2/5) **12.45** Short Works **1.0** The Three Musketeers (1/6) **1.30** Berkely Mather (6/8) **2.0** Casanova in London (2/5) **2.15** Agnes Grey (2/5) **2.30** Showstopper (1/6) **3.0** The Goon Show (10/17) **3.30** Little Blighty on the Down (4/5) **4.0** The Motion Show (1/6) **4.30** No Commitments (6/6) **5.0** The Psychedelic Spy (3/5) **5.45** Short Works

Yesterday's solutions

Wordsearch

S	N	I	O	C	T	D	G	S
S	A	V	I	N	G	S	M	M
B	A	N	K	F	L	K	V	R
T	Q	L	O	R	T	I	C	O
D	U	O	E	I	H	A	N	F
R	E	A	C	C	S	O	C	E
T	U	N	N	H	N	N	H	E
R	E	A	A	I	I	E	E	L
G	R	M	L	O	Y	T	Q	P
B	Y	R	A	L	A	S	U	P
E	D	E	B	T	P	D	E	R

Solution no 16,645

	L	A	N	D	L	U	B	B	E	R		
	A		I		U		U		A		N	
H	Y	D	R	O	G	E	N		G	L	A	D
	E		V		E		G		E		M	
	R	O	A	R		B	L	A	R	N	E	Y
			N		S		I				L	
	G	L	A	S	T	O	N	B	U	R	Y	
	O				O		G		P			
C	U	R	R	E	N	T		A	G	O	G	
	G		A		E		P		R		U	
V	E	R	B		A	D	U	L	A	T	E	D
	D		B		G		M		D		S	
		W	I	N	E	M	A	K	E	R	S	

Sudoku no 6,199

6	8	4	3	5	9	7	2	1
2	5	3	7	1	4	8	9	6
1	9	7	2	8	6	4	5	3
7	6	1	9	3	2	5	4	8
8	3	9	5	4	7	1	6	2
4	2	5	1	6	8	3	7	9
9	4	2	8	7	3	6	1	5
3	1	6	4	9	5	2	8	7
5	7	8	6	2	1	9	3	4

Word wheel

ATTACKING

Suguru

5	3	1	2	4	3
1	2	4	3	5	1
4	3	5	1	2	4
2	1	2	4	3	1
5	4	3	1	5	2
2	1	2	4	3	1

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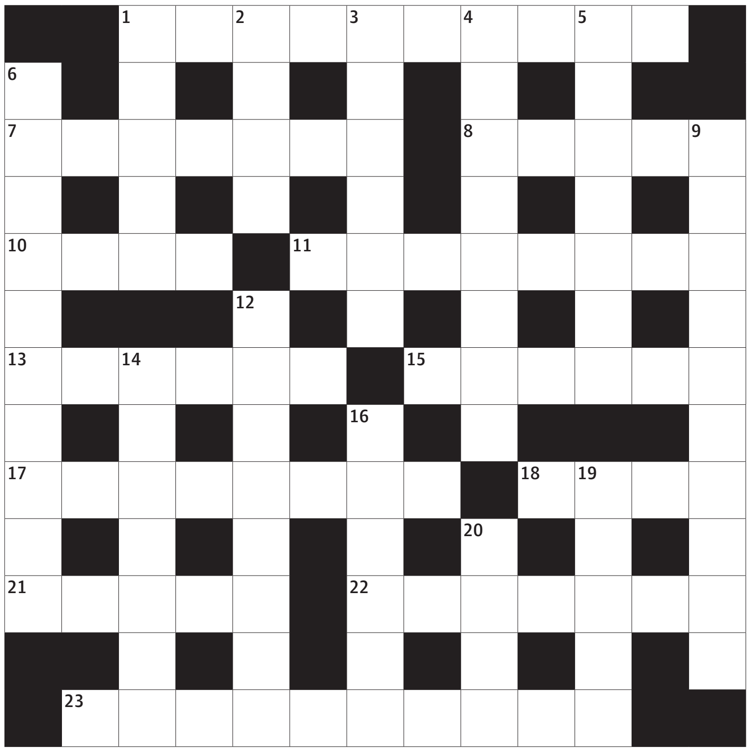
Quick crossword no 16,646

Across

1 Something that's partly good and partly bad (7,3)
7 Herb (7)
8 Stony substance that forms reefs in warm seas (5)
10 Stupefied (informal) (4)
11 Pre-prandial drink (8)
13 Portable computer (6)
15 Project for viewing - conceal from harm (6)
17 Balderdash (8)
18 Wind instrument (4)
21 Military blockade (5)
22 Fine porcelain with delicate colourings made in Saxony (7)
23 Pirates' ensign (5,5)

Down

1 Of poor quality (5)
2 Thoroughfare (4)
3 Group of touring performers (6)
4 Novelty sporting competition - arc cakes (anag) (4,4)
5 Instrument for execution by strangulation once used in Spain (7)
6 Blond fairytale protagonist (10)
9 French fabulist, d 1695 (2,8)
12 Canada's second largest city (8)
14 Medicine that has no physiological effect (7)
16 Food store (6)
19 Below (5)
20 Mass of ice floating in the sea (4)



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Sudoku no 6,200

Medium. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. Printable version at theguardian.com/sudoku

			7				8	
					4	5		6
6					1			
	5	1					4	3
		9	4		3	8		
8	3					7	1	
			8					4
1		5	2					
	9				5			

Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

2	5	4			
		2			
		4			

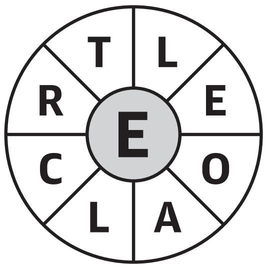
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 Shakespearean ladies in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

U	A	B	J	U	L	I	E	T
S	S	C	A	I	T	R	O	P
A	D	A	I	V	I	L	O	M
I	S	T	T	S	U	O	I	O
L	A	V	I	G	S	R	N	P
E	C	I	R	T	A	E	B	H
D	R	O	M	N	A	H	J	E
R	E	L	D	R	M	N	S	L
O	G	A	T	P	E	E	I	I
C	A	N	E	L	E	H	C	A
D	N	G	O	N	E	R	I	L

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-70. Good-59. Average-43.



Trivia corner

What was Kathleen Kennedy's first film as a producer?
a. ET the Extra-Terrestrial
b. The Color Purple
c. The Money Pit
d. Empire of the Sun
Answer top right

